



I'M REALLY A SUPERSTAR

BOOK 08

Chang Yu

EPUB CREATION BY LISA HAYES

I'm Really A Superstar

(我真是大明星)

by

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(尝谕)

Synopsis

Zhang Ye was originally a mundane college graduate with aspiring dreams to become a star, but unfortunately has below average looks and height. However one day, he woke up and suddenly found himself in a parallel world!

It's like the same world, but wait a minute...many brands, celebrities and even famous works from his world changed and are gone in this new world!

Armed with the profound literary knowledge of his previous world and a heaven-defying Game Ring that gives him magical items, stats and skills, Zhang Ye embarks on a journey to pursue his life-long dream of becoming famous!

Follow Zhang Ye as he takes the new world by storm, one plagiarized piece at a time, to hilarious reactions!

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Chapter 601 – Are You, Like, A Professional Actor?

In the studio.

The first round of auditions for Zhang Ye began.

Zhang Yuanqi, Dalong, Tian Xuetao, and the rest stood around and observed the audition quietly. The film crew was also looking curiously at Zhang Ye. Some of them had doubts in their eyes, especially the actor who was auditioning just before him and another pending candidate for the role. They were both wondering why the film crew would find an amateur actor, or rather a layman who in his daily life and work had totally nothing to do with movies and acting!

Some people were whispering quietly among themselves.

“Can Zhang Ye do this?”

“No idea.”

“Who invited him to join the audition?”

“I think it was arranged by the assistant director, but I’m not sure on whose recommendation.”

“He’s only a host, or at most you can consider him to be someone

who also deals with literature and mathematical work, so for this urgent and important role, why would they get Teacher Zhang to audition for it? If it's just a normal comedy movie, it's understandable since those do not require too much acting skill from a person, but Grandmasters is not the same as those."

"It's even an antagonist's role which makes it more difficult."

"Shh, it's starting, let's watch."

Zhang Ye heard a little of these scattered conversations from the people around him, but was not bothered by it at all. He was also not feeling a shred of nervousness. He might not be so confident at other things, but acting? When he had gotten those Higher Mathematics Skill Experience Books back then, he had also received 141 Acting Skills Experience Books along with them. These experience books were all "eaten" by him at that time and digested as knowledge and experience into his mind. However, he had not had a chance to use it until now. When Zhang Yuanqi called him to ask if he wanted to be recommended for the audition, this was the reason why he agreed to her offer without any hesitation, because he already knew what he could do.

What kind of concept was 141 books?

Even if he could not reach the top level like Zhang Yuanqi, Zhang Ye's acting skills would certainly not be worse than those other actors!

The assistant director said, "Set yourself free, become a tiger!"

Zhang Ye did not even hesitate and reflexively went down on all fours while making an explosive roar of a tiger, “Houuuu!!!!”

That was too loud!

And too sudden!

The assistant director, director, and Tian Xuetao along with the others were all caught off guard and jumped up in fright when they heard the roar. Not only were they frightened by the sound of his roar, even the fierce expression of the “downhill” tiger sent shivers through their spines! In the artistic field of painting, tigers could generally be divided into two types. One was the “uphill” tiger which depicts a tiger that was returning back to its lair after a satisfying meal, having an expression of content and serenity. However, Zhang Ye’s depiction of the tiger was a “downhill” one, the look of hunger as it went out to search for its next prey. A “downhill” tiger was one that was the fiercest and the most scary looking!

Zhang Yuanqi also looked at Zhang Ye in surprise.

Tian Xuetao and the second female lead both looked at each other.

The assistant director clapped and cheered as goosebumps broke out all over him. “What a great ‘downhill’ tiger impression! That’s good enough, Teacher Zhang!”

Zhang Ye stood up and dusted off his hands, looking as though he didn't do much. His throat was feeling a little hoarse since the part of his vocal chords that he used to make the roaring sound was a little different from the normal speaking part. It felt very abrasive and not just anyone could come up with such a sound.

His performance had really left everyone, including the directors and actors, stunned. Usually, when an actor was asked to set themselves free, even an acting student would know how to do it, not to mention a professional actor. Even if you grabbed a random performing arts student from Beijing Film Academy or Shanghai Theater Academy, they would be able to do it quite well. But the performing arts focused more on acting—whether the expression and spirit were like that of a real tiger, the sound part was secondary. But for Zhang Ye? Not only did he perfectly portray himself like a tiger, the finishing touch was really at the point when he roared angrily in hunger. Just between all these professional actors who were present today, none of them made a sound like that!

Why were they not able to do so?

It was down to the reason of their professions!

Zhang Ye's acting chops were enhanced by his consumption of the Acting Skills Experience Books, but his broadcasting background was entirely trained with great practice. At the Media College where he graduated from, Zhang Ye had specialized in vocal performance, so what the others could not do was no problem for him. This was an advantage he had over the others

based on his training, and also something that he wouldn't do poorer than others of the same profession, not to mention these laymen who only specialized in acting. Since vocalization was his specialty, the foundation techniques behind this roar was down to the hard training of three to five years. The frictional changes in the vocalization, with the adjustments of the vocal tract to how to change the frequency after a sound has been made—all of these were due to his knowledge!

The assistant director gave another topic, “Wolf. A wolf that is calling out to its pack.”

Having seen the previous performance, everyone seemingly had some kind of expectation now. All of them were staring at him without blinking.

Zhang Ye did not rush this time but slowly mimicked a wolf lowering its body, looking left and right and not making a sound for a few seconds before taking a few steps to the front and looking around again. Thereafter, he stretched his neck upwards and raised his head towards the sky as he slowly let out a continuous howl, “Awooooooo...”

One second!

Ten seconds!

From low to high pitched!

This breath and this sound actually lasted a full 17 seconds!

A few of the film crew staff even got goosebumps on their arms all of a sudden. The feeling was indescribable, except maybe calling it something similar to primal fear!

Everyone was once again stunned by Zhang Ye's performance!

How similar! It was just too similar! Not only did the expression look the same, even the howl sounded like a real wolf's howl!

A female staff member from the film crew who grew up on the prairies in Inner Mongolia cursed in her mind when she heard Zhang Ye imitating the wolf's call. This was as good as the real thing and if a wolf had poorer vocalization means, it might not even be able to howl as well as you!

The other actors only acted out the form and spirit of a wolf.

But it was Zhang Ye who added on the vocalizations that had married form and spirit to display a lifelike portrayal of a wolf!

With Zhang Ye's display, many of the professional actors around were thoroughly convinced of his acting skills. They could do the same as him, except for the vocalization part!

The assistant director continued on to the next topic, "An eagle that is..."

Director Wang Chengpeng interrupted him and gave a wave of his hand. “There’s no need to go further than that.”

The assistant director nodded. It was true that it wasn’t necessary to go on anymore. A basic acting skill like this needed no extra testing since none of those present could do any better than Zhang Ye. He knew that Zhang Ye’s broadcasting foundations had given him the bonus points, so he said, “Then let’s move to the second part, character portrayal.”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Alright.”

The assistant director said, “You can prepare a little to get into the mood of the character. Just follow along with the script that we gave to you earlier. You can just let me know whenever you’re ready.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “I’m ready. We can start anytime.”

For any actor to get into character, as long as it wasn’t a character similar to their own, they would definitely have their own methods to get into character and it was a very common thing to do. The assistant director had noticed that Zhang Ye did not do any preparation at all, but still claimed that he was ready, so he gave him a second look and said, “Alright, then start from the ninth scene for the third male lead’s first line.” The assistant director held his script and read from it, “The scenario is at the top floor of a skyscraper, the line is ‘I don’t care...’”

But Zhang Ye expression suddenly changed to a very cold look at this moment. The chill was expressed through a soft smile, yes, not a cold smile but a gentle-looking smile. He was still able to depict the lofty austerity with such an expression and it made people have a choking sense of tension when they saw it. He did not let the assistant director finish his words and directly started his portrayal by reciting the lines from the script, “I don’t care where you came from, all I know is where I want to go. Even your teacher can’t stop me, so who do you think you are? All that’s left of Xingyi Fist now are your teacher and you. How pitiful, how regrettable, and how sad! But, heh, your teacher is still more blessed than I am. At least he has a disciple who is promiscuous, unlike me who is all alone in this world now!”

The assistant director was a little stunned, but immediately said, “The 15th scene where the lines say ‘Don’t try to...’”

Zhang Ye’s expression changed again. This time, it showed a trademark antagonist’s villainous look. He said, “Don’t f**king try to bullshit me! In this era, who still dares to claim they are grandmasters? Your teacher can’t claim so, and you, you are even less deserving to claim so!” The original lines of the script were not exactly like that as Zhang Ye added in a vulgarity as well as adding function words to the ending part that went “you are even less deserving to claim so.” He did all of this based on his own sense of artistic portrayal of a character’s performance.

The assistant director breathed in hard and said, “The 33rd scene.”

Zhang Ye held his chest tightly as he took his last breaths.

“When...I die...my martial arts...cough...will really be lost for good....That’s good, might as well...cough. In birth...we bring nothing...” up until here, the script made no remarks of anything, but Zhang Ye suddenly increased his volume and shouted in a hoarse voice that made what he said a little inaudible, “In death, we take away nothing. Hahahaha!!”

It was loud laughter in the moments before his death!

The last bit of insolence in his life!

The second male lead, Tian Xuetao couldn’t help but be moved by this!

The other staff members of the film crew were all quite dumbfounded by this!

The assistant director who was stunned, said, “Did you memorize all of the lines already?”

“Yes.” Zhang Ye broke out of character very quickly as well as he immediately “walked” out of the scene. He did not have much thought about the acting he did earlier, but he understood that the 141 acting skills experience books he ate were not for nothing. It seemed like the effect was much better than he had expected. He said, “I memorized it already. Wasn’t I just reading from the script just now?”

The martial arts director beside him said, “You’ve only gone

through it once but already got it all memorized?”

Everyone could remember that Zhang Ye had only arrived at the studio a short while ago. Wasn't it just 10 minutes ago? That would just barely be enough time for him to go through the script once over! He only browsed through it and memorized every line in it?

Zhang Ye said matter-of-factly, “That's but of course. It's not like the lines are really complicated or something, so why wouldn't I be able to memorize it?” He answered in a rather impatient manner as he felt that they were all looking down on him like they were insulting his professional standards. If I couldn't even memorize these lousy lines after one look, then how the f**k could I still be a host! Are you all really taking me to be an ordinary actor? This bro is a professional host who could even do a live broadcast off-script! If I didn't have the ability, would I dare claim that I could do it! Isn't that question too degrading?

Director Wang Chengpeng, however, asked a good question. He looked at Zhang Ye and asked, “How did you think of adding that laugh at the end? It wasn't mentioned in the script, right?”

Zhang Ye said, “For a crazed martial arts master and an ambitious man, even though he was already tasting his own defeat at the end of his life, it would not fit him if he just went silently like that. I am a novel writer myself, if I may praise myself a little, and the sales of my books are doing quite well in the domestic market, so I am still quite sensitive and experienced about how the story should be set up and its character developments. In my opinion, this person would not just go away so quietly like that. It shouldn't be the case either. If he had to end it there, then surely

he must make it a grand exit. A laugh and a final bit of insolence seemed to be the best way out!”

Wrote novels?

Oh yes, this person was also known as a famous author!

This person really carried too many titles on him, so if he didn’t bring them up, everyone probably couldn’t remember it either.

When he heard this, the screenwriter who was seated at the back, said, “When Teacher Zhang mentioned this, it really does feel better if it were done like how he acted out earlier. It feels more complete than when Brother Shui had acted out the role and could be considered as a reeling in the character and also a sublimation of the role. It also brings to point that in this movie Grandmasters not only were the male and female leads grandmasters, but even the antagonist who got his just deserts was a grandmaster in his own right, just that he had taken a different path from them.”

The assistant director also nodded and said, “It was very well played out. The feeling I got was really good!”

And so, this audition of Zhang Ye’s had left the whole studio stunned!

His expressions...

His acting skills...

His understanding of the characters in the movie...

F**k!

At the side, a few actors and those two celebrity actors who had come for the audition couldn't help but cry out in their minds as they felt that, when compared to them, why does it feel like Zhang Ye was the professional actor instead!!

Chapter 602 – Zhang Ye’s Eight Trigrams Palm!

At the site of the audition.

The atmosphere of the audition was becoming a little difficult to perceive.

“So awesome?”

“Where did Zhang Ye learn how to act like this?”

“With that level of acting, he should already be considered a professional actor.”

“It’s even more than that, I think he’s even more professional than a professional actor. If I didn’t already know that Zhang Ye was a graduate from Media College, I would have thought that he attended Beijing Film Academy instead!”

“It would be good if he gets this role.”

“Right, it shouldn’t be a problem at all to age him by ten years with some makeup.”

“Teacher Little Yu does not look ruthless enough and is more suited for an honest character, but Teacher Zhang clearly looked like an antagonist and it didn’t feel weird when he stepped into

character. It's as though he was just acting as himself.”

“...”

“F**k, be quiet. Don't let anyone hear you.”

“Hai, why is Zhang Ye able to do everything!”

“Yeah, why are there traces of him in every industry? Not only does he like to cross over to other industries, the key is that it even feels like he belongs right at home in whatever industry he jumps over to!”

Some of the film crew staff on set were exchanging whispers.

The first round of auditions was over.

The second round was also over.

Now, there was only the third and final round to go—martial arts scenes.

The actor who went before Zhang Ye in the previous round was put on pending status at this round. That actor did not need to go through the acting audition and instead started directly at the character portrayal audition. He did rather well, about as good as Zhang Ye. The leaders of the film crew were also quite satisfied with his performance. However, in the audition for the martial

arts scenes, he did not impress at all and that led to the director hesitating to decide if he would use him as the replacement or not.

There were many actors, and a lot of them were also good actors. However, for martial arts actors or even martial arts stars, there were only a handful of people who could be called that. If this was just an ordinary movie production, it would be fine even if they just got any ordinary actor as the replacement. All they needed to do was just act out a fight scene with some fake motions, or at most use a stunt double. Most martial arts movies could always be acted out somehow, sometimes “cheating” a little by adding some special effects, all of which were fair game. But this particular production was different, as the core of the movie was focused on the title *Grandmasters*. It was a movie about Chinese martial arts and realism was its priority, or at least, realistic enough to the viewers. They couldn't possibly do it in a way that would leave the audience spitting in disgust when a fight scene was played out in the theaters. That would greatly impair the whole viewing experience.

The male lead, Dalong, was a professional martial arts star.

The female lead, Zhang Yuanqi, did not have many fight scenes, but Old Zhang had a dance background, so her physical conditions were all there and she only needed to act a little to make it feel real.

The second male lead, Tian Xuetao, wasn't good at acting or martial arts, but as he had a body double who looked very similar to him, his role was not a problem either.

As the third male lead, who was also an important antagonist,

would have multiple fight scenes with Dalong, they couldn't just find any actor who had style and no substance in martial arts. There was no time left for them to pick a double who could fight well and also look like the actor. Even as they were faced with the possibility of not being able to wrap things before the premiere, they still could not take things so lightly, especially not when it was also such a big production film. This was the reason why the film crew was so picky with Brother Shui's replacement; not only would they have to be able to act, they also had to be able to handle martial arts scenes.

"This will be difficult."

"The martial arts have to be for real. Even acting can't fake it."

"Yeah, the foundations for such martial arts movies are the most difficult. Many of the actors started learning since they were young, training hard with every move done repeatedly. These days, it's really getting hard to find an actor who can also do fight scenes."

"What to do?"

"Yes, it's more important to find a replacement at this point in time. The candidate has to be confirmed today and we can't drag this any longer."

"Zhang Ye is an academic who works in literature and the arts. I think he wouldn't do as well as the other actors when it comes to executing the basic stances for fighting. It's still unclear who the

director will choose. If he places an emphasis on the popularity, quality, and acting chops of the person, then surely Teacher Zhang Ye has an advantage over the others. But the antagonist has many important fighting scenes and those take up more than fifty percent of this character's appearances, so that is clearly the more important factor. Zhang Ye surely can't handle that."

"Let's see how it goes. I've heard that Zhang Ye frequently gets into fights with other people, like that Wang Shuixin's son, or that Korean celebrity, Lee Anson. Didn't he beat them up before? Right, there was also that plane hijacking incident. Wasn't that when Zhang Ye had to fight the terrorists to take control of the situation? I remember that was what was reported in the news!"

"That was him, but that's a different thing altogether."

"Yea, how is fighting and martial arts the same?"

"True that."

Everyone was observing the auditions and exchanging views with one another.

At the same time, a few important people of the film crew were also speaking in low whispers, exchanging their views on the audition.

Would Zhang Ye do?

Let him try it out first.

The assistant director said, “In the final round, we’ll test out your punch and kicks.”

At first, everyone thought that Zhang Ye would have difficulties with this round, so no one expected it when he just rolled up his sleeves and adjusted his shirt before standing there and saying, “Sure.”

The assistant director said, “Take some time to get ready first.”

“There’s no need, I’m ready.” Zhang Ye wondered to himself just how ready he had to be? Was it necessary to do some warm ups? Stretch his arms and legs? He did not need to do any of that, so he just said, “I’m ready anytime.”

The assistant director nodded and then looked to the martial arts director.

Under everyone’s watchful eyes, the martial arts director strode over to face Zhang Ye and was about to do a set of movements for Zhang Ye to follow along with so that he could understand his foundations.

But a scene played out in front of them that no one could have expected!

Zhang Ye had actually gotten into an opening form that no one

could recognize, relaxingly moving his hands and feet into a stance that no one could understand. He said, “Punches and kicks have no eyes, please be careful.”

Ah?

Be careful? What?

What were you even intending to do??

The martial arts director was also taken aback. He had come across many different styles of martial arts, even those that had branched into different sects from their original styles. As an industry insider, he had many more opportunities than the average person to be in contact with martial arts. However, even with his vast knowledge, he could not make out this opening form that Zhang Ye was displaying. It was like nothing he had ever seen before!

What style of martial arts was this?

Hai, it was probably something randomly made up by him!

The martial arts director did not take this to heart and just looked at Zhang Ye in a speechless manner, saying, “What’s the meaning of this?”

Zhang Ye was confused and said, “Aren’t we going to spar?”

Pfft!

Everyone who was watching was wondered whether to laugh or cry when they heard this. Who were you intending to spar with? That teacher from the film crew could be considered as one of the top martial arts directors domestically, a true martial arts expert. He had real martial arts background and had been trained in Xingyi Fist, Eight Trigrams Palm, and some other styles since his childhood. He was even ranked in some national freestyle combat competitions before, having made it to the round of 32 when he was younger.

And here you are, saying things like “punches and kicks have no eyes”?

You even want to spar with him?

You’re really too funny. What the assistant director meant was not for you to really spar with the martial arts director, but to follow the previous actor and imitate the martial arts moves so that they could evaluate if your physical movements are of a good enough standard!

Dalong laughed.

Tian Xuetao also couldn’t help but laugh ironically at this.

“We’re not going to spar.” The martial arts director smiled and

said, “We’re just going to go through the motions of it. Ten of you wouldn’t even be able to handle one of me since I am a real practitioner of martial arts. I am different from you all in that my execution and toughness of my moves can be really heavy. That is what you would truly refer to as ‘punches and kicks have no eyes.’ What if we sparred for real in the auditions? Then we might accidentally hurt people and if that happens, how would we be able to go on with the filming? What I need is just for you to imitate the martial arts moves.”

When Zhang Ye heard this, he also laughed and said, “Then I have misunderstood.”

However, on the topic of what the martial arts director had claimed earlier, he kept his reservations about it. Ten of me wouldn’t be able to handle one of you? You’re even afraid of hurting me? Zhang Ye could only laugh to himself about this. Don’t try to boast to me. If it really came down to us sparring, I wonder who would be the one to get hurt. If this was any other situation, Zhang Ye would have seriously considered taking it up with him. But since he was only here for the audition today to try to land the role in the movie, he knew what his priorities were. As a result, did not argue with the martial arts director over it.

The martial arts director demonstrated the moves and said, “Watch carefully.”

“OK.” Zhang Ye kept his eye on the martial arts director’s movements.

The martial arts director began. With his first move, it looked

full of vigor and extremely powerful. It was like the wind followed with every move of his fist, whistling along with each movement!

He struck out his palm!

Then pulled it back!

Next was a side palm strike!

He thrust his palm upwards!

This set of palm techniques was similar to what he had shown and tested the previous actors with. It seemed like it was of the same style of martial arts, yet still felt very different as the angle of the palm movements and the translational motions were not the same as before.

After a round, the martial arts director came back to the same spot as he had started. He finished off with a closing form and said, “Teacher Zhang, did you see clearly? I know that you’re more of an art person and have not dealt with martial arts before, but just do your best to imitate what I had just shown to you. Don’t worry too much, it will be fine.”

Zhang Ye finished observing.

Do my best?

Imitate it as much as I can?

What the heck was this? Didn't you just demonstrate the Eight Trigrams Palm!?

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Alright then, I'll give it a try?"

The martial arts director made a gesture for him to get started and then took a few steps back.

Instantly, everyone's eyes now fully focused on Zhang Ye.

The director, assistant director, Zhang Yuanqi, Dalong, Tian Xuetao, and everyone else were all waiting for Zhang Ye to start his movements. None of them thought that Zhang Ye would be able to do it like the martial arts director but were still curious at how well he could imitate the movements. When the previous actor had imitated the moves, the martial arts director had already informed Wang Chengpeng how it wasn't too bad even if there was barely any power in the movements and looked a little stiff. The movements were not standard, but were at least followed in a general sense. If not for those factors, it wouldn't have even worked out to an acceptable imitation. Now to them, Zhang Ye was unlikely to do any better than the previous actor.

Zhang Ye breathed in without showing any signs of pressure or nervousness, looking very relaxed. As he began imitating the martial arts director's movements from earlier, his feet started moving beneath him and he took the first step in the footwork of the Eight Trigrams Palm.

It was a simple step.

And also looked like a natural step.

However, this step was not noticed by everyone.

Except for the martial arts director, who, when he saw it, was a little shocked. Damn, you're just a layman, but how did you also manage to imitate the steps of the Eight Trigrams Palm? This step was too precisely executed. It was as standard as it could be and that left the martial arts director in disbelief with what he had just seen!

What was the Eight Trigrams Palm about? Everyone would think that it was about palm strikes, but they couldn't be more wrong. That would be the conclusion of a layman, but in actual fact, the core of the Eight Trigrams Palm was not down to its palm strikes but its footwork. The Eight Trigrams Palm was also known as Swimming [Bagua](#), Linking Palms. The “swimming” portion, also known as the footwork, was actually the base of the style. For example, when the two actors were auditioning for the role earlier, they had only concentrated on the movements of the arm and copied it in form while moving around blindly. The martial arts director did not take this to heart as he knew that they were only ordinary actors and different from martial arts practitioners like himself. It would be unreasonable to apply his standards to them as actors since it was already quite a big deal that they could remember how to execute the palm techniques.

Bagua (八卦) are the Eight Trigrams important to the I Ching and Taoism (They're also what you see on South Korea's flag).

But that was not the case for Zhang Ye!

The martial arts director knew that this step made by Zhang Ye was the real thing in the Eight Trigrams Palm footwork. The direction at which his feet pointed, the control of his steps, and more importantly, the change in his center of gravity, it was all flawless. The movements were exactly the same as when he had demonstrated it. Because of what he saw, it had left him a little shocked!

This...

Is impossible!

Chapter 603 – Landing The Role!

Huu!

Zhang Ye struck out with his palm, his footsteps following immediately after. Slanting his heel, he briefly held back before taking his next step. What followed was his second palm strike!

It caught everyone's attention!

That was really great!

He's following the moves as though they were really his own!

Yes, it felt a little weak. Why didn't he use more power? There wasn't enough power in it!

Eight Trigrams Palm? Zhang Ye definitely did not know the Eight Trigrams Palm personally, but there was a person close to him who knew it. Rao Aimin was the Senior Sis of the Eight Trigrams Palm style of her generation. In this word, he didn't know how many classes and sects of the Eight Trigrams Palm there were. The style of Rao Aimin's Eight Trigrams Palm was a little different from that of the martial arts director's style. However, the basic techniques and core of the martial arts style was more or less similar. Zhang Ye had seen Rao Aimin practicing countless times before and even had a taste of the landlady's Swimming Bagua, Linking Palms himself, and knew that her style of the martial arts was much more gentle and not as powerfully sharp as the martial arts director's style. However, the strength of power was definitely

there as Zhang Ye could still feel the pain of it from the receiving end. This was why even though Zhang Ye did not learn this martial arts style before he could still understand it very well and manage to execute the movements with exact imitating without any pressure at all!

In the audition area.

Zhang Ye could be seen moving around and executing his palm strikes!

Pierce!

Thrust!

Chop!

Everyone was already in a trance as they never expected that Zhang Ye, as a professional in the literary and artistic fields, would be this good at it and could even execute these few techniques.

Zhang Ye continued but did not execute the moves as powerfully as the martial arts director. It was like he did not exert too much strength at all, using a graceful and gentle style of the technique with free flowing movements. Every strike of his palm was preceded by a step, and every step was taken in the most stable manner!

Uppercut!

Cross!

Ram!

Hook!

Toss!

Shove!

The rest of the film crew probably could not see it but the martial arts director was already getting more and more shocked by what he was seeing. Zhang Ye did not even make a mistake in his routine for the Eight Trigrams Palm footwork and palm techniques. The moves were all perfectly executed, whether in terms of the angle or amplitude of motion; they were all flawless. Moreover, Zhang Ye's Eight Trigrams Palm gave the martial arts director a type of different feeling, like his verve and movements.... Why did they look like the style of that person who had disappeared from the Chinese martial arts world so many years ago? Legend has it that there was a master whose Eight Trigrams Palm exercised a combination of firmness and flexibility while still maintaining a grace about it!

The martial arts director thoughts went wild.

The other staff of the film crew were all watching without knowing what was going on.

Dalong could also be considered as half a martial arts practitioner and he knew what he was looking at right now. At that moment, he was looking at Zhang Ye in a strange way, seemingly having some doubts about him yet thinking that he seemed to be quite good at it?

Zhang Ye came back to his original spot, albeit facing the opposite direction, just as he finished executing the techniques and movement. His footwork was precise to the millimeter, and after executing the movements, he relaxingly cooled down without a closing form. Closing form were usually meant as a cool down, not just for the sake of appearances. Since Zhang Ye did not actually know the breathing and energy flow techniques of the Eight Trigrams Palm and was just imitating the look of it, he naturally did not need to do a proper cool down. It was not an action that he could imitate from the martial arts director anyway and there was also no need to do so. He was well versed in the breathing and energy flow techniques for Taiji Fist, but as they were not general purpose cool down techniques for the different styles of Chinese martial arts, it would be unprofessional to apply them here.

Phew, that was still quite tiring in any case.

And why was there no applause?

Zhang Ye smiled and asked, “Was that alright?”

The assistant director did not know whether it was good enough, so he said, “It...seemed alright and you’ve imitated it well

generally, but the only issue is that the movements did not have any power to it and thus, did not feel quite right. If we shot the movie with that kind of effect, the presentation would be quite lacking and without fervor, so that would be a problem.” He said so while looking slightly disappointed.

Ah?

Fervor?

What sort of fervor?

Zhang Ye had wanted to explain it by saying that they were too layman to understand it, but as he felt that it would probably fall on deaf ears since they would not understand it even if he explained, he simply said, “I have no problems putting more power into my movements.” Didn’t he simply just need to use more power? Could it be any simpler?

The assistant director said, “You can do that? Give it a try then.”

“Alright, no problem.” Zhang Ye adjusted his arm, ready to give a demonstration once more.

In the end, the martial arts director stopped him and said, “Teacher Zhang, you don’t need to do any more, it’s enough.” Then, he walked quickly beside of the director and assistant director and said, “I don’t think we need to test him any further.”

Tian Xuetao looked regretfully at Zhang Ye.

The assistant director nodded.

Wang Chengpeng looked at the martial arts director and said, “Zhang Ye couldn’t make the grade too? Then we’ll just have to find someone else to audition!”

The screenwriter, along with many of the film crew staff members, were now left with headaches. One couldn’t make it while another was also lacking by a bit. Who else could do it? They did not have much time left!

“Hai.”

“This is really troublesome.”

“All three of the auditionees are unable to make the cut?”

But over at that side, the martial arts director said in a stunned manner, “What do you mean by Zhang Ye couldn’t make the grade? That’s not it. Teacher Zhang is good enough.” When he saw the stunned director and the assistant director, the martial arts director added, “In fact, he is far too good!”

Everyone was stunned.

“Ah?”

“What do you mean?”

“Zhang Ye is good enough?”

“Surely not? Weren’t those movements too lacking in power?”

“Right, even though he managed to generally imitate the moves correctly, there still wasn’t enough strength or an imposing manner, so...”

The other two auditionees who still held some hope were in an even greater state of disbelief at the martial arts director’s words. You call that good? Isn’t that setting the bar too low! If his kind of soft and weak moves could pass, then we could do it too! Surely we did better than him, right?

The director asked, “Just what do you mean by that?”

The martial arts director explained, “What the assistant director had just brought up is not a problem at all. It’s not that Zhang Ye couldn’t exert any power, but my strength comes from the muscles while his strength comes from the palms, so the style of exerting power is not quite the same and just differed by a little bit. I believe if we ask Teacher Zhang to display a style or technique that looks more powerful, he would surely be able to do it. Besides, I’m not sure whether it was because of Teacher Zhang’s good memory, but he could follow exactly the way I demonstrated my moves earlier. Not only the palm stance and angle, even the footwork was the same. My Eight Trigrams Palm emphasizes a lot on footwork, so

even the way the feet are pointed can't be slightly off. If they are it will affect the stability and position of releasing the palm strikes. However, what Teacher Zhang had managed to do...has totally left me in disbelief!"

Everyone could only look at each other in shock!

Zhang Ye said in a low key manner, "My memory is indeed quite good."

The martial arts director praised, "Not only do you have a good memory, you're also very talented!"

The director asked, "How many marks will you give him?"

Without even thinking, the martial arts director answered, "Full marks! It was flawless! Such a talented actor with martial arts abilities is totally competent enough to be the third male lead with all those fight scenes! There will surely be no problems at all! However, based on Teacher Zhang's image and physical condition, I'd have to re-choreograph his fight scenes and not fully use Brother Shui's style for him. Some of the moves need to be slightly refined."

The assistant director slapped his thigh and exclaimed, "Great, that's really great!"

Wang Chengpeng also stood up without any objections, pausing for a moment before proclaiming, "I hereby announce that Zhang

Ye will officially become our replacement for the third male lead's role in Grandmasters!"

Applause started to echo in the studio.

Tian Xuetao and the others clapped to welcome their new colleague.

Zhang Ye also clasped his hands together and said, "Everyone, please take care of me."

Wang Chengpeng reached out his hand and said, "I hope we can work well together. The next few days of work will all depend on you now. Rushing the filming schedule can be quite tiring, so please feel free to let us know if you have any requests."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I do not have any requests. I will do my best and cooperate fully."

Tian Xuetao went up to congratulate him and gave him a thumbs up.

The assistant director had already prepared a contract and went through it simply, explaining the clause and conditions once over before Zhang Ye signed it.

He finally landed the role officially!

Chapter 604 – The Consciousness Of A Teacher Of The People Is Higher

At the scene, everyone was starting to get busy.

The director and staff of the film crew were giving out their instructions for the shoot.

“Get in place, everyone, get in place!”

“Camera 1, pull back.”

“Once the actors are done with their makeup, we will start immediately.”

“Will the extras take note: please remember to stay behind the yellow line as there will be a explosion scene later. Although it won’t be dangerous, everyone should still take note not to stray past the yellow line.”

“Is Teacher Zhang ready?”

“Not yet, but he’ll be ready soon.”

“Alright, we will start rolling the cameras once Teacher Zhang finishes getting touched up!”

.....

In the studio.

A female makeup artist quickened her work on Zhang Ye as she applied makeup on his face here and there. Very soon, Zhang Ye could see himself aging 10 years in the mirror, but perhaps due to the fact that he had only very average looks, it did not make him look too different. He would probably still be recognized by his fans immediately.

Drawing his eyebrows.

Applying some eyeliner.

He was still quite unused to all this. As a host, he never had to do such makeup to make him appear more villainous looking. At most, he needed to apply some foundation to take the shine off his face for the camera.

Zhang Ye had already changed into his costume for the role, similar to that of a [Chinese tunic suit](#). He did not just sit there doing nothing, but was going through the script repeatedly. This time, he wasn't going through the script for his own role, he was going through the overall screenplay for the whole movie which had all the information of the characters, including their age, where they were born, their background, character developments, etc. To enable him to play his role well, he had to know the full screenplay as it would aid him to better understand the intertwined relationships and plot. With this information, he

would know what emotions to portray and at which time to do it.

This was the first time that Zhang Ye had seen a full screenplay, and to be honest, it left him a little confused as there was simply too much information in it. The plot was also very rich, with many subplots happening at the same time. It even included a list of alternative plots and script lines. As the filming had actually already wrapped a few days ago, a lot of these backup plots were deleted since they were not used or cut from the final version of the movie. Because of this messy editing in the screenplay, when he saw it, it also left him unable to comprehend what was still valid or what was already invalid. It felt like a good movie, but it also felt like it might not be too good. He didn't know for sure.

Back in his previous world, Zhang Ye was a movie buff as well. Every time he had finished watching a film, he would always discuss it for a whole day with his friends. They would point out what they felt were errors, or a part of the movie that was not well shot, a part of the story that wasn't logical, or even say something as extreme as how a movie was so bad that it shouldn't even have been produced. Thinking about it now, it was really easy making those comments as an audience member. Only when he was put into the situation himself did he realize just how complicated a movie production was. Just this screenplay alone had given him a lesson on how difficult it was. As the saying goes, the insider knows the ropes, while the outsider just comes along for the ride. That couldn't be more true, as everything was always easier said than done.

The female makeup artist stepped back and adjusted her head as she observed her work, then with a sudden snap of her fingers, she said, "It's done, Teacher Zhang." She turned around and shouted,

“Director, Teacher Zhang’s makeup is done.”

Zhang Ye put down the screenplay, stood up, and went outside.

“Alright, everyone, get into your positions,” Wang Chengpeng said loudly.

The assistant director said, “Teacher Zhang, take your position over there.”

Wang Chengpeng instructed him, “Remember, you need to be more expressive with your emotions later on. When Old Zhang and Dalong walk over, you need to have aggression in your eyes. Don’t hold back on that.”

“Sure.” Zhang Ye got into position and sat in the armchair, at the center of all the extras. He held up a cup of tea and sat up straight.

Wang Chengpeng had his own style of directing. He used a megaphone and ran through the plot for this scene. Even though the actors were already very familiar with it, he did not leave out a single word and explained in detail about the entire scene. This was to help the actors relax and at the same time lead them quickly into their character roles.

“Three.

“Two.

“One.

“Action!”

Suddenly, the air was filled with the din of clashing gongs and cymbals.

Many of the extras were putting in the best efforts for this scene of celebration at a martial arts school.

Zhang Yuanqi was dressed in a long white robe, while Dalong was in his martial arts attire as they walked slowly over. The two of them were already in character. Zhang Yuanqi had an icy expression while Dalong was all smiles as he laughed and joked as he walked beside her. Soon after, a smile appeared on Zhang Yuanqi’s face and she gave Dalong a look.

The three of them met.

Zhang Ye was covering his tea cup as he raised his head to meet their eyes.

Zhang Yuanqi and Dalong were both standing in front of him at this moment.

Suddenly, Zhang Ye’s eyes narrowed as the tea cup lid lightly knocked against the tea cup!

“Cut!” The director called out.

Zhang Ye looked over.

Only to hear Wang Chengpeng say, “Little Zhang, that’s not good enough. You need to express more with your eyes, show your aggressiveness. The way you’re looking at them is correct, but it needs to be more intense because it’s not enough to carry it from real life into reel life.”

Zhang Ye understood and said, “Alright, I’ll take note of that.”

Dalong and Zhang Yuanqi both said nothing and went back to their own positions.

Wang Chengpeng shouted, “Again, action!”

And so, the second take was over and done with.

Next up was the explosion scene. Zhang Ye did not have to do much for this scene and only had a line in it. It was very simple for him as this scene had more focus on Zhang Yuanqi and Dalong. The both of them had already shot this scene before, but because a few cuts needed the third male lead, Zhang Ye, to appear together on screen with them, they had to redo this scene’s shoot again. Of course, the reshoot was only done for the critical cuts. Those parts that did not have Zhang Ye appearing would use the original footage instead.

As it was a little dangerous, the preparations for this scene were also more troublesome and took a little longer. Dalong's errors led to two cuts; two extras who didn't portray the right expressions also made the director call for a cut three times. When one of Zhang Ye's lines did not communicate the mood of the scene, a cut was also called. For this whole scene, it took almost an hour before the the director was satisfied with the outcome!

When the director finally called for a stop and gave it the "pass," all the actors breathed a sigh of relief and went for their breaks. With this, some people from the film crew went ahead to settle the payouts to the extras since their work was done here.

Dalong came up and asked, "Director Wang, are there still any scenes for me?"

Wang Chengpeng considered for a while before saying, "There's nothing left for today. You and Old Zhang can go back first."

"Alright," Dalong said.

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, "I don't need to be around either?"

"It's fine, I just need your double to be around. The key shoots will be tomorrow." Wang Chengpeng said, "There should be some scenes tomorrow morning, but I will need to see how the shooting will turn out this afternoon first to see if we can wrap the planned scenes by today. Zhang Ye doesn't have much experience in

filming, so I won't be able estimate how long it will take. This afternoon's scenes are going to be the problem."

Zhang Yuanqi laughed and said, "Little Zhang shouldn't have a problem with that."

Dalong said, "I'll be leaving first then. If there's anything, you can just give me a call. I'll keep my cell phone on." As the film crew was going through its most difficult period now, everyone certainly had to work extra hard together to ensure a successful outcome.

The two leads left while Wang Chengpeng went to find Zhang Ye. Having already known him by now, he no longer addressed him as Teacher Zhang and instead just called him Little Zhang. "Little Zhang, how's it going?"

Zhang Ye dipped his head in greeting and said, "Quite well."

"Being cast into a lead role on your debut, it is already great that you can perform this way up until now. At least, you've exceeded my expectations for a rookie actor." Wang Chengpeng praised, but reminded him and said, "This afternoon and evening, we have a few scenes planned for filming. There will be day and night scenes, so I suggest you follow and stay with the film crew for the next few days. See if you require anything like a change of clothes and let me know. I will get someone to help you out with that, or you can get someone from your family to send them over."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "That's not necessary. I'm not

particular about such things. I just need to give a call to my mother to let her know about my schedule.”

Beside him, the assistant director said, “We’re going to have to go into the mountains tonight. It’s going to be a tough shoot.”

“No worries,” Zhang Ye said.

The assistant director asked, “Do you have any diet preferences for lunch and dinner? I can get someone to prepare it for you.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “I can eat anything. A box lunch is good enough.”

The assistant director said hesitantly, “We do not know what time we’ll be shooting until tonight, so you...”

“I’m fine with whatever time we shoot until.” Zhang Ye said with a shrug, “Even if I have work round the clock, 24 hours without sleep, I should be able to do it. No problem. Just let me know your arrangements. As long as we can complete the filming properly, I have no objections. You’ll have total control of me for the next few days.”

The directors asked so many questions because, these days, celebrities were putting on airs more and more often. These days, it was a market of commercial productions. A movie’s attractability mostly started with an actor. If the actor was a big-time celebrity, it wouldn’t be easy to get them to join the movie.

Even if they did, their temperaments were difficult to handle. For example, Dalong had many requests when it came to meals. For meats, he only took mutton, and would not have any chicken or pork. He was also very picky with any other side dishes and the film crew had to specially get those individually for him. Then, for Tian Xuetao, his conditions were that he has to go home everyday to sleep and not stay with the film crew. No matter how late it got, as long as they were in the vicinity of Beijing, he must be allowed to go home. If they were out of the city or country, he would request a hotel so that he could go back to it after filming. Together with some other celebrities with thousands of strange requests and conditions, nothing was really too odd and they had almost seen it all before.

This time, since they had to find a replacement to save the situation as the matter was very urgent, leaving them with not much of a choice, they naturally placed great importance on Zhang Ye's participation in the shoot. They would have given him much better treatment and would try to satisfy him in whatever ways they could. That was the reason why they asked so many questions of him, since they did not know Zhang Ye well and what special requirements he had of the film crew.

But Zhang Ye?

He had no special requirements whatsoever!

He was fine with anything! Everything was alright with him!

This made Wang Chengpeng nod positively to no end. He waited until Zhang Ye walked away before becoming unable to contain

himself and said to his assistant director, “Intellectuals and artistic people alike are indeed much better to work with.”

The assistant director felt the same, so he said, “Yes, Teacher Zhang is almost a B-list celebrity now, but for a person of that status to still maintain that humility, it’s really rare. I heard from a friend in the industry that Zhang Ye really gives it his all when it comes to work. He had even recorded a show for over ten hours continuously for seven or eight days straight. There was also the case where he worked 24 hours without rest to help Beijing Television Station complete their public service announcement. He had really risked his own life for that! Hai, the consciousness of a teacher of the people is much higher than most people. If only our actors were like Teacher Zhang, then the duration of our production would have sped up by at least 30%!”

The screenwriter who was behind them blinked and said, “Zhang Ye is quite...different from what the rumors say about him.”

The assistant director turned around and said, “Yes, he’s really quite different from them.”

The Zhang Ye in the rumors had too many nicknames!

The maggot of the literary world!

The oddity of the entertainment circle!

The hooligan of the educational world!

To many of the staff on the film crew who had heard about Zhang Ye before, they felt that he was a person who had a very bad temper and was someone who would beat up or scold others without even resorting to talking things through. However, the reality now was that they saw him in an entirely different light compared to what they had heard about him. Zhang Ye was not only unlike how they imagined him to have no respect for others, he was also someone who worked very hard, was professional, and dedicated to his work. Just look at it. When the box lunches arrived, everyone else was eating their lunch and resting while Zhang Ye sat further away, reading his script for the next scene as he ate.

They did not know that Zhang Ye had always been like this. If he decided to do something, he would be determined to finish it. He would always take his work seriously and do his best, not allowing himself to make any errors or be negligent. He was the type of person who would work so hard that he would risk his own life.

Chapter 605 – Authentic Taiji Fist!

Afternoon.

The box lunch was very simple. It just consisted of rice with two side dishes. It also came with a bottle of mineral water.

“It’s this again?”

“Hai, just make do and eat it.”

“This box lunch is hardly edible at all.”

“They really need to change the caterer. This is really terrible.”

“Yeah, it’s not even better than what I can make. Just looking at this leaves me with no more appetite. How can you stir fry winter melon in this way? This is basically just a box of everything mixed together.”

Around the area, some of the more important extras and two body doubles were together eating lunch with the film crew staff, complaining as they ate. Some of them were not even intending to eat at all.

Zhang Ye tasted a bit and felt that it was just as they had said, very average tasting, but not to the point of unpalatable yet. Even if it were unpalatable, could it compare to what they served him in

the dark room at the police station? When he had been arrested back then, he didn't even pick at his food, so being here, he just finished his lunch in a few mouthfuls and then washed it all down with the mineral water. After that, he continued to read his script.

When an extra saw this, he was a little lost for words.

Similarly, the other small-time actors and extras also looked one by one at Zhang Ye. When they saw the empty lunch box, they could only look at each other for a moment before lowering their heads to finish up their own lunch. No one else complained or said a word after that. If a top-ranked C-list celebrity, a position they all knew they would never, ever reach, did not mind the food, who were they to say anything?

A double took a few more looks at Zhang Ye. This was seemingly just a small action, but reflected a lot more about how things were. This double thought to himself that it was no wonder Zhang Ye who had only debuted for about a year would achieve so much in this short time. He was someone who often got scolded by the media for this and that, a professional that was so frequently doubted by the industry insiders, but somehow still managed to be so popular among the people. He knew that there was a good reason for all of that now.

In the afternoon.

Zhang Ye called his mother on her cell phone.

“Mom, what are you doing?”

“I’m at work.”

“Heh, I’m just calling to let you know that I won’t be home for the next few days. I have work to do.”

“What work is it?”

“I got a role in a movie.”

“Well done, my son.”

“That’s true. This is a big production and I will be following the crew around for these few days. Tell Dad about it as well. I will only be going home when the filming wraps up.”

After he hung up, the martial arts director also came over and said, “Teacher Zhang, have you finished eating?”

Another double also followed behind him. One look and it was clear that he was Dalong’s double. Even though his face did not look similar, his body proportions were similar. He greeted, “Teacher Zhang.”

“I’ve already finished my lunch.” Zhang Ye switched off his phone and stood up. He said to them, “Please don’t call me Teacher Zhang. There’s no need to be so courteous. Just call me Little Zhang or Little Ye. That’s good enough.”

The martial arts director smiled and said, “Alright, forgive me then.”

But the double said, “It’s better that I stick to calling you Teacher Zhang. You’re an intellectual and an associate professor at the university. I can’t possibly call you Little Zhang. Even if I wanted to, I just can’t do it, so I think I’m more comfortable calling you Teacher Zhang.”

Zhang Ye did not argue with this.

The martial arts director said, “Why don’t you warm up a little first? We should begin our preparations for the fight scene that will be filmed this afternoon. Why don’t we practice some of the movements first before finishing it with a final runthrough before the shoot.”

In a martial arts movie, the most important core for attracting viewers was definitely its fight scenes. These were also the most exciting parts of the movie, so they couldn’t be done sloppily. It was very troublesome to film a fight scene well, so sometimes effects would be added in post-production with modern advanced methods. However, the most basic movements of the actors exchanging punches and kicks needed to look real in the first place and nowhere at this stage should any effort be saved. They would have to practice the movements first before moving on to a fight sequence practice between the actors. One would punch, one would kick; all of these needed to be practiced and drilled into them with no room for errors.

Soon after.

The three of them went to an empty area to start their practice.

The martial arts director stood in the center and said, “You have a good memory and your physical condition is quite good as well. I could deduce that when you did your audition just now. So let’s do this like we did earlier. I will give an overall demonstration of the fight scene’s basic sequence and you follow after me. Hopefully, you’ll remember everything.”

“Sure,” said Zhang Ye.

The martial arts director said, “The style of martial arts that your character uses is Taiji Fist. Watch carefully!”

Hearing this, the double showed a face of concentration, while Zhang Ye looked at the martial arts director in anticipation.

Zhang Ye had read the screenplay several times already and knew that the third male lead was the one and only descendant of the Taiji Fist school of martial arts. In this world, Zhang Ye had found out from Rao Aimin that Taiji Fist was lost many years ago. The first time and last time it appeared was already several hundred years ago. Moreover, whether this martial arts style had truly existed before was also legend in itself. Those who had even heard about it before were in the minority and treated it as a myth. However, only those who were true practitioners in the Chinese martial arts world knew that Taiji Fist was not fictional and that it had existed before. It was known to have impressed for a period of

time those several hundred years ago when the descendant of Taiji Fist defeated many martial arts grandmasters, making it a renowned martial arts style.

A martial arts style that had been lost for hundreds of years now. How would you demonstrate it? Unless you knew it?

—That was what Zhang Ye was curious about ever since he saw the screenplay, curious about how the scenes involving Taiji Fist would be shot. He was full of anticipation and did not even blink his eyes as he watched patiently!

When the martial arts director said that he would demonstrate for them, he only meant that he would do a few simple movements. He raised his hands in preparation and did a horse stance at a very odd angle. It would make anyone watching feel like they understood it, even though they didn't, and also looked like it was a mysterious martial arts style of some kind.

Zhang Ye: "..."

The martial arts director showed a domineering face as he threw a punch.

Zhang Ye: "....."

The martial arts director gave a long laugh before he kicked his leg out sideways!

Zhang Ye: “.....”

As there was no opponent to spar with in the demonstration, the moves that the martial arts director displayed were quite disconnected. Only after he had gone through the moves for a routine did he finally finish off with a closing form by clasping his hands together.

The double watched with admiration and went over to say, “I’ve heard before from some friends in the martial arts world telling me that this style of martial arts used to really exist. From just now, I’ve been meaning to ask you. Do you really know this style of martial arts?”

The martial arts director smiled a little and said, “A little bit, I guess.”

The double looked at him, overjoyed, and said, “Then could you teach me a little? Oh, I am too straightforward. This is too abrupt. I understand that it is not something that can just be taught to others even if I wanted to learn it. I understand the rules.”

“It’s not a matter of rules at all.” The martial arts director smiled and explained, “I am really unable to teach this to you since I only know it generally and only have some simple moves to show for. I heard from my teacher that the real Taiji Fist does not have any standard moves and has never been passed down before either. There are no descendants of this style anymore. It has been lost for a long time already. My teacher had learned a few moves from some master who in the past had researched Taiji Fist from the anecdotal evidence found in the martial arts world and pieced it

together. That is why I only know those few moves myself, but if you really want to learn it, that was all that there is to it. As for the other moves and the core teachings behind Taiji Fist, I do not know about any of that since the real Taiji Fist had disappeared hundreds of years ago!”

The double said excitedly, “Even if it’s just a few moves, it’s enough for me. This is Taiji Fist that we’re talking about here. So many practitioners want to learn but could never find a way to even begin learning it!”

The martial arts director felt quite good about the compliment another gave him so he said, “Alright then, I will show you the moves once more. I believe Teacher Zhang did not get a good look at it earlier, so watch and learn!”

“Thank you! How great is it!” The double’s eyes brightened at this.

The martial arts director displayed the same posture as earlier and said, “Remember, this is the opening form of Taiji Fist. You will need to keep your hands up and out in front, regulate your breath, sink it down to the lower half and get into a forward leaning horse stance posture!”

The double immediately followed him and imitated his stance.

The martial arts director started to swing his arms and instructed as he did so, “Taiji Fist emphasizes on the balance and interconnectivity of yin and yang. These two energies move in a

continuous cycle of endless succession. This, is yang, and it needs to be strong!”

The double tried his best to follow along with each movement.

“This is yin.” The martial arts director locked his wrist and hooked his fist. “And it must be gentle!”

The double followed along closely, imitating almost perfectly.

Between the two of them, one was teaching and the other one was learning, and they spent an inordinate amount of time on it.

Finally, when they both finished with their closing forms, the double bowed deeply to the martial arts director as a form of respect. He then clasped his palms together and said, “Thank you so much. To have learned so much about the real Taiji Fist. I...I can’t even come up with words to describe how I feel. Ever since I was young, I’ve always heard about the legendary Taiji Fist. So many people wanted to witness Taiji Fist for themselves in these several hundred years, yet died with a lifelong regret of not being able to see it at all. I can only say that I am very honored.”

The martial arts director smiled and said, “Since you like it, practice it well. The knowledge of Taiji Fist runs very deep.”

“Yes, I will definitely practice well!” The double had seemingly found a precious jade stone, and afraid he would forget about it, once again started to go through the movements for “Taiji Fist” in

high spirits!

The martial arts director still stayed by his side to give him guidance. “Right, that’s right, you need to wave your hands a little. Move them up and down. That’s right, very good!”

Zhang Ye had been staring at them from where he was, looking at them moving about as they practiced. From the start until now, he did not say a word at all, because he was really at a loss as to what he should say!

Practice well?

Practice your sister!

Taiji Fist?

Taiji your grandpa!

Zhang Ye nearly vomited a mouthful a blood, wondering to himself just what sort of style of Taiji Fist the martial arts director was teaching!

Keep your hands out in front? What was the meaning of placing your hands out in front? Did you think that you were guiding the traffic!? Regulate your breath and sink it down to the lower half? Were you getting ready to fart? And what do you mean by leaning forward while doing the horse stance? This was the first f**king time I’ve heard that an opening form for Taiji Fist has to be a

forward leaning horse stance! Why didn't you just lie down on the floor for your opening form instead? You're even mentioning waving the arms and legs? Wave your grandma! Were you turning into a butterfly? Is this what they would call the damned Urgent Peeing Fists??

Zhang Ye utterly had his hands tied by this martial arts director. If you did not know it, then you should just say it. What the heck are you boasting for? You just believe whatever anyone says when they show you some Taiji Fist moves? This is the dogshit kind of Taiji Fist! If you don't know it, don't act like you know it. Yet here you are, even teaching someone else and spreading the "glory" of the martial arts style?

The martial arts director suddenly said, "Teacher Zhang, do you still remember what I just showed? Alright, then I'll let both of you give it a try to get a feel for Taiji Fist."

Brother, please don't mention the word Taiji anymore, OK?

What the both of you did just now really was not Taiji Fist at all!

The double quickly lunged forward and clasped his hands, bowed his head, and said, "Teacher Zhang, please forgive me in advance. My fists might be a little heavy, but I will make the necessary adjustment in strength and not hit you for real. Just come at me with all you've got. Don't be afraid of hurting me, because you won't be able to anyway."

Zhang Ye: "..."

Come at you with all I've got?!

Just based on your external style of martial arts, if I used only 10% of my strength on you, you'd still end up in the hospital!

However, Zhang Ye did not say that out loud and just returned the bow. He could no longer watch just like that and was ready to teach them a small lesson today—about what authentic Taiji Fist was really like!

Chapter 606 – Now This Is Taiji Fist!

In the movie studio, many people had their attentions caught by the movements over at the practice area.

“Eh?”

“They’ve already started their practice?”

“The fight sequence has already been choreographed? Have they finished learning it already?”

“It can’t be that fast. Those scenes require the two actors to slowly learn and repeat until they get it right.”

“Let’s go over and take a look. I wonder how Teacher Zhang is handling it. Learning the movements is entirely different from practice sparring with an opponent. To be able to get the effect like they were fighting for real, they have to wear protective gear under their costumes and actually spar hand-to-hand. Otherwise, if they use quick cuts to conceal some actions in the scene, it won’t look too believable anymore. How fast Teacher Zhang can pick up the fighting sequences will affect how quickly our afternoon’s shoot will progress. If he’s slow or can’t pick it up at all, then we might not even be able to finish this afternoon’s planned scene by night time, and that would roll over to the next scene as well.”

Quite a number of the film crew’s staff went over to where they were practicing.

When the director and assistant director saw this, they walked over there to watch as well.

Wang Chengpeng asked the martial arts director, “You’ve already taught them the fight sequence?”

“More or less. I’m letting them try it out first to get a feel for it,” the martial arts director answered.

Very quickly, over 20 people surrounded the practice area. They were basically done with their own tasks and were just waiting for Zhang Ye’s practice to finish so that they could carry on with the filming. Since they had nothing to do, they might as well join in and observe how it all was going. Everyone had surrounded the practice area and formed a circle as they pointed at them, discussing what they were seeing.

In the middle of the practice area.

Zhang Ye and the double were already in position.

Seeing that so many people had gathered around, including the director and assistant director, the double got an adrenaline rush from the attention he was receiving. Having just learned a few moves of the legendary and long-admired martial arts style, Taiji Fist, his desire to perform well in front of all them was swelling. He said, “Teacher Zhang, may the best man win. Watch out, I’ll make the first move now!”

Zhang Ye calmly said, “Come on.”

The martial arts director reminded, “Watch your movements. They must be standard.”

When the double heard this, he immediately committed to a horse stance and followed the instructions that were taught to him earlier. His horse stance was slightly tilted to the front, making his whole body look angled while his hands were even more standardized as his hands were placed straight out in front. In giving an opening form of Taiji Fist, he felt he looked very valiant and was enjoying every moment of it.

Around them, the people’s eyes all brightened up a little. Previously, the role of the descendant of Taiji Fist martial arts style was played by Brother Shui. They had already seen his acting before. But an actor was just an actor at best, especially since Brother Shui was also not a professional martial arts actor, so there was surely a difference when compared to a stunt double who had martial arts skills. From just a move, although Brother Shui’s Taiji Fist opening moves were quite scary and domineering, his aura was just outwardly strong but inwardly brittle. He could only depend on post-production effects to be added, like having some music overlay, the sound of wind moving his clothes, or leaves flying around from the shockwaves whenever his feet landed on the ground, all of which could help to play up his abilities. However, the stunt double in front of them had only made a stance, which was good enough to not need any special effects and still had the oomph factor—this was what real martial arts was about.

But in contrast, when they looked at Zhang Ye?

Zhang Ye also got into a opening form, similar to the one that he showed in the studio earlier which no one knew. There wasn't much distance between his feet while his hands superficially made some movements without exerting additional strength, like someone could just break his form by tugging at his hands a little. His shoulders were also drooped and that made him look somewhat listless. All in all, his overall form looked terrible!

“What is that stance?”

“Did the martial arts director teach him that?”

“Why does it not look impressive at all?”

“A positive and negative. The difference is too great.”

“Don't ask for such high standards. The stunt double is a professionally trained martial artist and has some skills while Zhang Ye's a literary and arts worker, so how can he match up to that?”

“That's true.”

When the double saw Zhang Ye's form, he was dumbfounded. What the hell was this?

The martial arts director was also left absolutely speechless by what he saw. This Teacher Zhang! Didn't he already go through the moves for Taiji Fist several times? Why was he still unable to remember it? Did he forget the opening form? What kind of an opening form was he displaying now then? It looks like it's incredibly weak and full of openings. Whether it be internal style martial arts or external style martial arts, neither of them would ever have an opening form like yours. If anyone rushed over to attack, you'd be flattened in no time!

"Teacher Zhang, it's not done that way!" the martial arts director said, and thought to himself that a layman would always be a layman. It was a chore just trying to teach them. He asked him, "Where is the horse stance? Why are you not leaning forward!"

But Zhang Ye did not move.

The stunt double glanced at him and said, "That form of yours won't do. If I just attack once, you won't even be able to withstand a strike from me. That opening form is full of weakness. We won't be able to practice our sparring properly this way."

The assistant director gave them a word of caution and said, "Please be careful. Don't get hurt, especially Teacher Zhang. You have to take extreme care not to get hurt, otherwise, there won't be any more replacement actors to take your place!"

Zhang Ye casually said, "No worries, just come at me."

“I’m afraid I will hurt you,” the stunt double hesitated.

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “That might not be the case.”

When the stunt double heard him say that, he might just as well abide and said, “Alright then, I’m coming for you!” As his words trailed off, he attacked according to the martial arts director’s teachings. He struck out a palm with a weird trajectory, with a slight feint to make the move look very beautiful. He knew that Zhang Ye would not be able to stop this attack and thus, adjusted his strength and lowered it by 60 or 70%. He put the remaining 30 to 40% of his strength into the attack at Zhang Ye!

The martial arts director praised, “Good movement! That is what they call the Taiji parry!”

Parry?

Zhang Ye could only shake his head in his mind. His arm went up, and suddenly, the form that was full of openings earlier had turned into a different form. Zhang Ye’s hand had already received the attacker’s arms!

Smash!

The two of them collided!

Everyone was staring with their eyes wide open, enjoying what they were seeing. However, a scene they could never have expected

happened right before them and it left them all dumbfounded. After the first clash, Zhang Ye was left unmoved from the spot he was standing in while the double who had executed a very beautiful looking technique had lost his balance and stumbled to the side a few steps. He had lost his momentum there and then, and was unable to execute the next move!

The stunt double was a little confused. “This...”

Zhang Ye smiled and thought to himself that what his opponent did was not parrying, but his own move was.

The martial arts director was slightly taken aback at first when he saw this, but quickly smiled and said to the double, “Teacher Zhang still has quite a bit of strength, so you don’t need to hold back too much.”

Only then did the crowd understand. Oh, so it was because the attacker was not being serious.

The double reacted and said, “OK, Teacher Zhang, again!”

He came near Zhang Ye once again, but used his legs instead, this time in a different stance. The strength of the kick was even greater and felt like it would be quite a strong one!

As the kick came flying in!

Zhang Ye blocked it again!

Crash! The fist met with the kick, but no one noticed that a technique had been executed in the few milliseconds when Zhang Ye raised his wrist slightly and bent it a little, which made the double's center of gravity shift. Because he had put in a lot of power into his attack, he lost his balance greatly as he staggered a few steps away and hurriedly tried to regain his footing. He was already sweating heavily at this moment!

What happened?

What was this situation about?

The double was dumbfounded and wondered why his Taiji Fist did not seem to work. And what was that martial arts style Teacher Zhang Ye was using? Why was he able to negate half of the strength in my attack in such an odd way? Not only did he negate a part of it, it actually felt like he used that negated force against me? Otherwise, why would I have lost my balance? Only those who had experienced it for themselves would be able to understand how terrifying it was. The double was already in a daze and feeling confused. This move by Zhang Ye seemed like martial arts, yet it also did not seem like martial arts. No one had seen such a style before!

Zhang Ye smiled and asked, "Still coming?"

"One more time!" The stunt double was getting a little pissed and still not convinced that he was losing. If his opponent was also a martial arts practitioner, he would definitely be convinced, but

right now, this opponent was a literary and arts worker, so it was impossible that he would have such advanced martial arts. He felt that Teacher Little Zhang had definitely just gotten lucky. Chinese martial arts really weren't as fantastic as the layman thought, since after all it was just a skill consisting of some techniques. As the saying goes, even an old master can be downed by an accidental punch. This was as true as it sounds. Consider a person who knows a little bit of martial arts and a person who doesn't know martial arts but has great strength. If these two fought, you'd never be too sure who'd win it. Who knows? If your attack was a little too light, your reaction was a little too slow, the ground was a little too rocky, or even if you were just standing in the headwind, all of that could lead to the other person winning. Nothing was absolute at all.

Whoosh!

The double came at him for the third time!

Zhang Ye calmly stood there and took on the attack at a speed that was neither too fast nor too slow. As the stunt double was ready for this, after his move had been parried, he closed in on Zhang Ye. When Zhang Ye saw this, he followed through with the momentum and went near him as well!

With a slight lean of his shoulders.

The double was pushed back four or five paces, wearing an expression of surprise!

“Again!” He was getting a little frustrated!

However, Zhang Ye just smiled and said, “Sure, as you please.”

Hur hur, again? No matter how many times you try, it’s useless!

The double rushed in again, using the Taiji Fist techniques he learned from the martial arts director. What he did not know was that those moves that he had picked up were in fact not Taiji Fist at all. They were not even anything close to Taiji Fist. He was facing Zhang Ye, who was a true Taiji Fist expert, perhaps not an expert if he were in his previous world, but in this world right now, Zhang Ye was the only person who knew Taiji Fist!

A counterfeit of counterfeits style of Taiji Fist coming up against an authentic style of Taiji Fist. This was a gap that couldn’t even be compared!

The stunt double kept attacking!

Zhang Ye kept negating his attacks without breaking a sweat. He was only putting in 10 to 20% effort to deal with him for now as he did not wish to hurt someone or to expose his foundations in Chinese martial arts since he did not fully understand the situation of the martial arts world of this world yet. It was better not to provoke any trouble because of this situation. For now, he was just demonstrating his ability as the only person who knew Taiji Fist in this world, to show the martial arts director and stunt double that Taiji Fist was not as simple as they thought. What they were practicing could not even be called Taiji Fist at all!

Upward deflect!

Side deflect!

High parry!

Low parry!

The double felt trapped in a bog right now, and in front of him was a huge mountain or perhaps a wide river. No matter how he tried, he felt like he was a clay oxen going out into the sea, never to return. He couldn't at all muster any more strength from his own body!

Wang Chengpeng: “.....”

The martial arts director: “.....”

The assistant director: “.....”

The film crew's staff around them were all dumbfounded by what they saw!

Chapter 607 – You Guys Win!

It became a bit quiet.

There was a state of confusion.

“What’s going on?”

“Was the stunt double dancing? Why didn’t he use any strength?”

“How did Zhang Ye manage to do that?”

“Why couldn’t Dalong’s double even match up to an artist like Zhang Ye?”

“This display is so beautiful that I’m afraid to look at it! What’s the situation?”

“Hello, double bro, did you seriously try to fight at all? How could you still not break through after three stances? Are you afraid of hurting Teacher Zhang Ye?”

Everyone was busily chattering and discussing away!

None of them could accept this scene that played out in front of their eyes!

The stunt double was nearly in tears. I didn't fight seriously? He swore that he had really given his best and even used up all his strength for it. For some reason, even though he felt that his opponent was not strong and had a form that was full of openings, he still could not bring him down!

Wang Chengpeng's expression was full of curiosity.

The martial arts director was also surprised.

Zhang Ye spoke at this moment, "Still want to have another go?"

"No! I'm not fighting anymore!" The double quickly admitted defeat and said, "My techniques are not good enough yet as I just learned Taiji Fist a short while ago."

Your technique? Taiji Fist?

Zhang Ye was at a loss for words. He decided that he was not going to carry on with this farce any longer.

In the end, the double quickly defended himself because he felt a loss of pride. He said, "If I had used my specialized external style of fighting, the results would not have been the same. The strength of my blows would certainly increase by thirty to forty percent and my stances would not have any openings. Then you couldn't have handled it." Actually, he was not purposely giving an excuse, as he really thought that this would be the case as well. Having just

learnt Taiji Fist, he was unfamiliar with it. Besides, it would require day after day and year after year of practice to hone his skills before the effects of his training would manifest itself. Internal style martial arts were not like external style martial arts. They required patience in training and needed to be nurtured slowly. He felt that if he had used his external style of fighting against Zhang Ye, the outcome would have turned and Zhang Ye would definitely not have been able to take three stances from him!

Zhang Ye looked at him. Do you really think that if you had used an external style of fighting instead, it would've been enough? Hur hur. But he eventually did not say another word since he did not want to deal another blow to his opponent!

Wang Chengpeng and the rest of the film crew understood after hearing the explanation.

“So that’s the reason!”

“That stunt double only has a superficial understanding of Taiji Fist since he had only just learnt it.”

“Just like I said. If he had used his specialized martial arts, how couldn’t he win against Teacher Zhang? So the reason was that he did not put in too much effort and was just doing an exchange of skill with Teacher Zhang.”

“That explains it.”

“That gave me a fright. I really thought that Teacher Zhang was a hidden Chinese martial arts expert but it was just an illusion and the stunt double was only messing around with him.”

The martial arts director seemingly realized something at this point, nodded vigorously, and then said to the double, “Go back and train some more. That’s what internal style martial arts are like. Unless you spend a few years in training, you won’t see any results since it is unlike external style martial arts which can be picked up very quickly. Besides, Taiji Fist is already a lost art with the mnemonics, breathing techniques, and meditation ways missing, so this path will surely be tougher to walk down. I can only teach you up to here. As for the rest, it will have to depend on you.”

Zhang Ye thought to himself, You want to continue practicing just based on this technique alone? Even if you trained until your arms fell off, you wouldn’t be able to learn anything!

The double clasped his hands together and said with a smile, “Thank you!”

The martial arts director pointed out, “But for the reason of shooting the movie, we just need to show the movements of Taiji Fist and it will be good enough. Teacher Zhang, I saw your technique from earlier.” Saying so, he turned to Zhang Ye and advised, “Although it looked pretty good, you need to know that it’s not because the forms were good but because your opponent used a set of techniques that he wasn’t good at. Even if anyone else were to spar against him, it would have been a similar outcome. Your technique is too messy and doesn’t have a focus at all with no

proper stances. You were only moving around clumsily in all directions with no objective, like a move that someone would pull out in a street fight. I don't know where you learned that from, but in any case, as long as it helps strengthen your body, it's fine with me. But still, we can't possibly use that in the movie. The techniques are too crass."

Crass?

His techniques were crass?

Zhang Ye nearly rolled his eyes. Your sister! This bro was kind enough to show you guys that Taiji Fist was not done that way, but you all turned it all around to teach me a lesson instead? Initially, he had thought of using the authentic Taiji Fist style to shoot the movie, but who could have expected that these bunch of people were complete amateurs. Even if the real Taiji Fist that has been lost for several hundred years were displayed before your very eyes, you would not be able to recognize it!

The martial arts director said, "I will demonstrate Taiji Fist once more, so watch carefully, Teacher Zhang. You have to remember it well this time as it will be needed for this afternoon's shoot."

The assistant director exhorted him, "Little Zhang, it will be hard on you."

Zhang Ye helplessly said, "OK."

“Observe carefully.” The martial arts director demonstrated again his version of the so-called “Taiji Fist.”

It looked very powerful with the large movements!

Several of the staff members of the film crew continuously sang the praises of it!

“Good one!”

“Amazing!”

“This is what real martial arts is about!”

“Taiji Fist is indeed worthy of its reputation. Earlier on, the stunt double did not do too well with it, but the martial arts teacher is truly a professional. His demonstration of Taiji Fist is too mesmerizing!”

“That’s because he was ranked in a national free combat competition before.”

After the demonstration, the martial arts director said, “Teacher Zhang, you try it once.”

Zhang Ye imitated it without any spirit at all. This time, it was different from earlier when he imitated the Eight Trigrams Palm which he had seen before. But for this this idiotic style of “Taiji

Fist” was something he had never even come across before, so how could he imitate it well? He could only roughly execute some techniques while stumbling through the moves!

The martial arts director said, “That’s wrong! Taiji is classified as yin and yang and it is shown in the opening form of Taiji Fist. That is the key and no mistakes can be made at this point!”

Zhang Ye: “...”

The martial arts director continued, “The depth of Taiji Fist is so profound that you won’t be able to understand it even if I explain further. Just remember my forms and follow accordingly. There’s no need to know the reason.”

Zhang Ye: “...”

The martial arts director said, “No, that’s not it! Why are you still executing the same unorthodox moves like earlier? Taiji Fist’s parry move is not done like this! You should push it outwards!”

Zhang Ye: “...”

The martial arts director said, “You’re getting there, that’s right, try again.”

Under everyone’s watchful eyes, Zhang Ye was executing the moves one by one while learning from the martial arts director.

The moves were looking more and more alike!

The moves were looking more and more alike!

The moves were looking more and more alike!

The martial arts director finally praised him, “That’s how it should be!”

The assistant director agreed and said, “You are a quick learner.”

Wang Chengpeng also nodded and said, “It’s getting more similar. If we shoot the scenes this way, it will definitely turn out well.”

Upon seeing Zhang Ye’s “improvement” and “growth,” the film crew was delighted and the martial arts director was even happier. He felt that Zhang Ye was a promising student and worthy of being taught. If not for Zhang Ye’s towering reputation, he would be interested in taking Zhang Ye as his disciple and imparting all of the Taiji Fist techniques to him so that he could do his own training.

Finally, with each stroke and movement, Zhang Ye surprisingly mastered most of them with his moves looking basically the same as the martial arts director’s moves. Of course he also felt a tinge of sadness and pain as his familiarity at “Taiji Fist” improved while his intelligence was also rapidly decreasing at an alarming rate!

Whatever!

You guys win!!!

Chapter 608 – Countdown To The Movie's Release!

A week later.

On this afternoon.

Zhang Ye's parents were throwing a grand feast at home. Naturally, it was only a feast for their own relatives as it had been awhile since they'd had a gathering, so this was also an excuse to have a meal together.

His uncles and aunties were seated comfortably and having tea together.

His three cousins were romping about, as well as shouting and screaming.

Cao Tong asked, "Why isn't Bro back yet?"

Cao Mengmeng remarked, "I'm getting hungry."

His mother laughed and said, "Little Ye called to inform that he'll be back by noon, so it should be soon."

His father said, "Let's not wait for him if everyone is hungry. We can eat first."

“No, no.” First aunt said, “Little Ye has not been home in a week already, following the film crew around all this while. We definitely have to wait for him come home before we start the meal. Sister-in-law, did our Little Ye take part in the filming of Grandmasters? Together with Zhang Yuanqi, Dalong and the rest? The news mentioned this movie before. It’s a big production with a famous director and the main cast is also quite magnificent. Since Little Ye is playing an important role in the movie, his popularity will surely shoot up very quickly.”

His mother answered happily, “Yes, he was filming for that movie. I don’t know what the movie is about, but since he told me about it himself, it shouldn’t be wrong?”

Outside, the jingling of keys opening the door could be heard.

“Ah!”

“He’s back!”

“Let me get the door, I’ll go get it!”

Before the three sisters could get to the door, it had already opened.

Seeing so many of his relatives in the house, Zhang Ye exclaimed, “Whoa, everyone’s here? First Uncle, First Aunt, Second Uncle, Second Aunt, Third Uncle. Why is everyone here today?” He

looked a little worn out, but was still in great spirits although he did feel quite tired. It seemed like the past few days spent with the film crew had worn him out. After he came into the house and greeted all his relatives, he took off his shoes and sat down directly onto the sofa, not wanting to get up anymore. He said loudly and tiredly, “Mom, hurry up and start cooking the meal. I haven’t had anything good to eat for a week already!”

His mother, feeling sorry for her son, said, “I’ll go and prepare it immediately!”

His Second Aunt asked, “Was the treatment so bad over there?”

Zhang Ye sighed and said, “It wasn’t that great. We had to go into the mountains, make camp, and sleep in tents. A few days ago, when we were in the south for a shoot, we were even caught in the rain and got trapped in the mountains. I couldn’t sleep or eat well, and there were times when I couldn’t take a bath too, so let’s not mention it again!”

His eldest younger sister poured some tea for him and asked, “Bro, did you get to see Dalong?”

Zhang Ye took the tea from her and smilingly said, “How could I not have seen him? I have three scenes together with him.”

“Dalong’s Battle at Huangsha Port is my favorite movie!”

“Bro, did you ask for his signature?”

“I heard that Tian Xuetao is also one of the main leads in the movie. Does he look as good in person as he does in the movies? I have a few classmates who like him very much, but I find him to be just so-so.”

His sisters chimed and chirped.

While his mother was preparing the dishes, he shared his experiences with the film crew to his relatives. Everyone listened with intent as he related, “...When I got there, they wanted to test my acting abilities and even taught me some moves which they claimed were ‘martial arts.’ I was so amused when I saw it. That kind of lousy martial arts and lousy moves, I could just close my eyes and play along with them, easy peasy. At first, I wanted to choreograph my own moves to let my character’s fight scenes look more realistic, but they insisted that my techniques were too crass. Heh, those words nearly made me rage at them. They really don’t know what’s good for them and it seemed like what I said was falling on deaf ears, so I thought about it for a while and decided, whatever, why should I be putting in so much effort? After all, I’m not the main lead of this movie. If they insist on those moves and think that it looks better, I will just follow accordingly. It’s not like I’ve suffered a loss anyway.”

His youngest sister said with a grin, “Bro, why do I feel like you’re boasting again?”

The eldest and second sisters were covering their mouths and secretly laughing at him too.

Zhang Ye said to them, “You guys just don’t know how great your brother is. If you all knew about my martial arts skill, you’d surely fall to your knees and look up at me in admiration!”

The critical truth was, even if Zhang Ye didn’t want to follow the film crew’s choreography, he could not do so. In his previous world, everyone knew what Taiji Fist was. They liked seeing it and felt that it was a very strong set of martial arts, but only because they already had a certain understanding of it. However, in this world, no one had ever seen the real Taiji Fist or understood anything about it, so even if Zhang Ye were to show his moves, they would not accept it as they had never come across anything like it before. Subconsciously, they would immediately judge it as not good enough, but that was how it was, as appreciation for something was also down to habitual conditioning. Besides, even if Zhang Ye tried to argue his point, being a rookie actor, the third male lead, his voice wouldn’t be loud enough to make any impact. The entire movie was already planned and filmed. So Zhang Ye, being the new guy, wouldn’t have the clout to get the film crew to make changes as he saw fit. No one would have listened to him.

And so, being cast in his first role as one of the main roles made Zhang Ye grow a lot. He learned much about the film industry, and felt that if he had another chance in the future, he could look at developing in this area, but of course it would be best that he could be the director himself. Otherwise, he would have to listen to whatever the film crew said. That would be too constraining. If he were the director instead, he could shoot however he wanted with whatever moves he liked. On top of all that, he would surely leave the overall lead role for himself too. How awesome would that be?!

After the meal.

His relatives went home.

Zhang Ye went back to his room and checked on the recent Celebrity Rankings Index.

C-list Celebrities:

First: Shi Yu.

Second: Chen Fanghua.

Third: Zhang Ye.

After the Peking University incident, Zhang Ye garnered a lot of reputation from the nationalistic youths with his “idiots” scolding and jumped up in rank to second place on the C-list rankings above Chen Fanghua. But ever since then, he did not make much appearances in the public anymore, so his popularity score didn’t move much and even declined a little. Together with Chen Fanghua having some new works and news coverage, she moved ahead of Zhang Ye in terms of popularity gained, again making him now one step further away from getting to the B-list.

From this, it could be deduced just how important having exposure was!

But overall, it wasn't an issue for Zhang Ye since he believed that he could bounce back in the next few days due to the impending release of Grandmasters! Of his last minute addition to the cast of the movie, Zhang Ye had rather high expectations of it. First, because he had spent almost all of his reputation points to activate the upgraded version of the Lucky Halo to get this job, he wanted to gain them back. Second, since this movie was officially his debut in the film industry, it was an important opportunity for him to expand his fan circle. He was looking forward to this movie paving a new path for him, to help to grow his fan base and expand his foray into new areas of work.

He was not like those other celebrities who only had simple goals, concerned only with their small group of fans and scrounging off of them for the rest of their lives. Zhang Ye had great ambition and an even bigger appetite. He wanted to move on to the global stage and needed fans and support from people who were not limited to his work on variety programs, Weibo followers, or poetry lovers. In the near future, he was planning to move into other areas to fight for the new achievements that no one else could accomplish.

The television industry.

The film industry.

The music industry.

The mathematics field.

The literary field.

The computer technology field and so on.

When he has gathered achievements in seven areas of work, Zhang Ye would then be able to summon Shenron!

Of course, his current short-term developmental direction was still geared towards becoming a television station's host. After all, that was his old profession and he had yet to become the best in that industry. Having not hosted on a satellite channel before, he was clearly still far from the pinnacle of the hosting world. At the very least, he was targeting hosting a few top television programs that he could list as his achievements before he would consider himself to be at the peak! Only then would he dare to proclaim that he had seen success in the field of television!

This was also Zhang Ye's reason for working hard this time. He wanted to raise his popularity rankings through his role in Grandmasters, hoping that he could break past the barrier and into the B-list. Then with Beijing Television's Do You Remember, he would showcase his potential in program planning, allowing the more elite television stations to learn about him and seek him to join them. Zhang Ye wanted to use his own capabilities and popularity to cover for what others thought of as his "character deficiency." But of course, Zhang Ye did not believe there was anything wrong with his character in the first place. Instead, he felt that it was the characters of others that sucked!

On the internet.

The trailer for Grandmasters was back and showing on several online video hosting websites again. The key word being “again” because this movie has already done a round of promotions, but was put on hold after Brother Shui’s arrest and subsequent inclusion on the SARFT’s list of banned artists. The fact that the trailer could air again also cleared any doubts that Grandmasters could not be released!

“Let me see.”

“I’ve been waiting for this for too long!”

“There hasn’t been any news for a week now. But better late than never. I’m so looking forward to this movie. Oh, anyone know what happened to the antagonist’s role that Brother Shui was playing?”

“It’s going to be released so soon? Did they just cut all the affected scenes? That can’t be? If they did it that way, the plot would be full of holes. No matter what, Director Wang is still a renowned director, surely he wouldn’t degrade his own reputation like this?”

“Ah! Quickly take a look at this!”

“This...this person is?”

“Damn it! Did I see wrong?”

“Oh my god, why is Zhang Ye in this!”

“Although he looks much older, his face still looks the same, just that he has a mustache and beard added on. This is really Teacher Zhang, no doubt about it!”

“What? Zhang Ye was the replacement?”

“Teacher Zhang, damn it, you’re crossing over into other industries again?”

“What the heck, isn’t this crossover too big of a jump?! He’s even cast as one of the main roles?”

“What’s wrong with Director Wang? Did he get so anxious that he just went with a random replacement? How would Zhang Ye know how to act? It might have been alright if you just let him do a cameo scene, but you’re actually casting him as the antagonist? The main antagonist? Just how bold did they all get? He’s only a host by profession, if you put him in the movie, wouldn’t he just look confused?!”

From the trailer, countless viewers had now noticed the presence of Zhang Ye in the movie. Many people had already predicted earlier that the film crew of Grandmasters would definitely find a replacement to reshoot the scenes that the main antagonist appeared in and had made a list of possible replacement actors. From the most likely to the least likely, 10 names were included as everyone guessed who would be the replacement to save this

production. But it ended up with no one making the correct guess at all since the replacement turned out to be the infamous Zhang Ye, that same person who had recently led a large group of Peking University students to scold and chase off a Japanese delegation!

Some people still did not quite know who he was.

“What’s this antagonist actor’s name?”

“He looks familiar, but I can’t remember his name right now.”

“Who is Zhang Ye?”

“I know him. He’s always being mentioned on the news, but I’ve never really paid attention to him before.”

Grandmasters had started its production a year ago and was highly anticipated by everyone because there was a famous director helming the film with a star-studded cast. When the news of Brother Shui’s arrest was announced and subsequently, negatively affected the movie’s chances of being released, all kinds of news had helped increase the attention on the movie. Because of that, many people who did not know about Zhang Ye previously were suddenly searching for his name when they saw this trailer, wanting to find out more about this actor who helped to rescue the release of Grandmasters.

The topic was being hotly discussed!

Grandmasters was being hotly discussed again, with a large part of the discussions being doubts!

“This is too unbelievable!”

“I’m totally disappointed by this movie now. Why did they find a layman as the replacement?”

“Zhang Ye was definitely a wrong choice!”

“Haha, who says that Teacher Zhang is not good enough? Teacher Zhang has always been known for his successful crossovers in the entertainment circle. Although he is a host, he is also doing very well in the mathematics world, so who can guarantee that he does not know how to act? In any case, I strongly support Teacher Zhang!”

“After reading the comment above, I am unable to make a response to it.”

“Pfft, that’s really quite true!”

“I still do not believe that Zhang Ye can act well!”

“I’m so irritated by Zhang Ye! Boycott him!”

“How does this person keep coming back on the news? Hasn’t it only been a week since he disappeared after the incident?”

Suddenly, at around 2 PM in the afternoon, a number of actors from the cast of Grandmasters began updating their Weibo.

Zhang Yuanqi's Weibo: "Please look forward to the movie. There's a surprise in store for Grandmasters the movie."

Dalong's Weibo: "Posting the Grandmasters trailer here. You can participate in the lucky draw for a chance to get my autograph." A link was posted along with his update.

Tian Xuetao's Weibo also posted a joke to Zhang Ye: "I saw earlier that there were many people scolding Zhang Ye. @ZhangYe Teacher Zhang Ye, in the past, I heard that you have a very poor reputation but it wasn't something that I was convinced about. Now I've realized the rumors are true. It seems like you have offended quite a lot of people! Ha!"

Yao Jiancai also appeared from nowhere and replied: "What did I miss? When did Little Zhang join a cast and film a movie?"

Peking University's Teacher Su Na forwarded the post on Weibo.

Radio host Wang Xiaomei Liked the Weibo post.

Dong Shanshan also made a post on Weibo: "Wishing the crew of Grandmasters a record breaking box office earning!"

The director of Grandmasters, Wang Chengpeng, had not intended to say anything at first. The actors were all busy posting on Weibo and appearing on television station programs to promote the movie. Wang Chengpeng was also not slacking as he had more work to handle than them. However, when he saw such heated discussions regarding Zhang Ye online, he felt he had to say something to address everybody's criticisms.

A few minutes later.

Wang Chengpeng's Weibo updated: "We've already wrapped up filming and production for Grandmasters. The recent scare has left us all really shaken, and having met all these difficulties and faced with the possibility of the movie being taken down, I can only sum it all up with one phrase—the road to success is strewn with setbacks. I would like to thank one person here. Thank you Zhang Ye, for coming to our rescue when the film crew was in its most difficult period. Without any requests, demands, or conditions, you just worked as hard as we needed you to. In the past week, as we reshot the footage for your scenes, all the other actors had their chance to rest, except for you. In every scene, we needed Zhang Ye's participation and that in turned led to him only getting about four hours of rest each day. On one of the days, he even got only an hour of sleep. But what really moved me was that, from the start, no one from the film crew, including me, heard Zhang Ye complaining about being too tired to carry on. In fact, he even did his job in the most perfect and outstanding way and completed his role's scenes with utmost professionalism. For an actor like that, I can only admire and give respect to him. Those who doubt Zhang Ye's acting skills can watch Grandmasters first before commenting on it. I believe no one will be disappointed, as Teacher Zhang joining the cast of Grandmasters only served to improve the film's quality!"

With that post, he had given Zhang Ye his highest praise!

When the netizens saw this, they were left wondering in doubt.

“Is he really good?”

“I’m skeptical about it.”

“If Director Wang can say that, then it must not be bad.”

“I’m really anticipating the movie now. I wonder if I can attend the movie premiere!”

“It shouldn’t be too many days away now?”

“It should be soon. They’re promoting it as the film is getting reviewed at the censors. Once that is done, they can distribute the film to all the movie theaters. But I believe that the schedule for its release has already been arranged.”

On websites and in forums, the promotions were overwhelming all possible channels.

There were promotions in the form of trailers as well as posters that were put up all over the major cities in the country. The

posters for Grandmasters were put up at the bus stops, subways, and shopping malls. Nobody even knew if the movie has already been approved or not, since the release date was also printed on the posters. On the posters, there was a picture of Zhang Ye on the far right side, in his role as the antagonist and with a fake mustache. This was actually the first time his image was publicized in such a manner, and across all the major cities, helping him gain even more popularity.

On this night.

It was just past midnight. The Celebrity Rankings Index had just been updated. In the newly released rankings for the next day, Zhang Ye had once again surpassed Chen Fanghua and went up to second place out of the C-list celebrities. It was possible that their popularity scores were not that different to begin with, but the promotions for Grandmasters surely helped a lot as well.

Anyhow, Zhang Ye's popularity score was now considered to have stabilized at last.

Not only that, there was even a slight increase as he began his chase for the number one spot in the C-list rankings!

The Zhang Ye who was forever unwilling to step out of the limelight and stop in his march had made his comeback again after one week of lying low! With his new role and work, he was now charging forward for the top spot!!

Chapter 609 – Day Of The Premiere!

On the day of the premiere of Grandmasters.

Morning, around 9 AM in Beijing.

Hall 1 of Xianglong UME International Cineplex.

Backstage, a staff member was helping Zhang Ye put on makeup, while most of the other actors had already done their own makeup at home or at their companies to prepare for the red carpet walk. The scale of the premiere was clearly going to be quite large but as Zhang Ye did not have a management team or agency, and certainly no makeup team, he had to get the makeup artist from the film crew help him after he arrived. He was holding his cell phone in his right hand and talking to someone as his makeup was being done.

“Brother, we have arrived!” his third sister said.

Zhang Ye said, “Then come in. It’s going to start soon.”

His second sister snatched over the cell phone from her and said, “They are not letting us in because we don’t have any tickets.”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “OK, I got it. How many of you are there?”

His second sister replied, “There’s five of us. Me, Big Sis, Mengmeng, and two of her classmates. Brother, come out quickly to receive us, hurry up! I can’t wait to see the celebrities!”

“I’m still having my makeup done now and can’t go out yet. Wait a little while, I’ll get someone to bring you in.” After hanging up, Zhang Ye made a call. “Hello, Little Wang, it’s Zhang Ye. I have some relatives coming for the premiere and they are at the entrance now. Can you help bring them in for me?”

Little Wang immediately said, “No problem, no problem!”

Zhang Ye said, “They’re five young girls so it should be easy to spot them.”

“Don’t worry, Teacher Zhang, leave it to me,” Little Wang answered promptly.

“Thank you and sorry for the trouble, Little Wang,” Zhang Ye said.

For these kinds of movie premieres, most people couldn’t get ahold of the tickets even if they were willing to spend money to buy them. They would still need to call in favors to purchase the tickets as they were so highly sought after. However, as one of the main cast members of Grandmasters, it was not a problem for Zhang Ye to bring some family members to attend as long as it wasn’t too many people. They did not need any tickets either. And, at most, if there were no seats to accommodate them, they could just bring in some extra chairs, so it was not a big deal at all. His

three sisters were crazy about chasing idols and liked to attend such activities as well. Since yesterday, they had been pestering Zhang Ye to let them come to the movie premiere. Since it was his sisters' request and not difficult to agree to, Zhang Ye naturally would not refuse them.

At the venue of the movie premiere.

The reporters were all in position.

The audience was also fully present. The venue was packed.

Little Wang, who was part of the organizing team, brought Zhang Ye's sisters in from the side entrance and led them directly to the seats in the 4th row, close to the front. Although the area was slightly to the right, the location was still quite good as they could see the stage in front of them quite well.

The eldest sister, Cao Dan said, "Thank you, Brother Wang."

Little Wang smiled and said, "You're welcome. Have a seat. Come and look for me if you need anything." With that, he went to busy himself with his work.

Cao Mengmeng's classmate, Little Qian exclaimed, "Wow, we even get to sit so close to the front?"

Cao Mengmeng's other classmate, Little Wen said, "Mengmeng, your brother is so marvelous! This is the first time that I'm attending a movie premiere. This feels so awesome! I'm so excited!"

Cao Mengmeng chuckled and said, "Of course, who do you think my brother is?"

His second sister was also said very excitedly, "It's starting, it's starting!"

The movie premiere began.

One by one, the actors walked down the red carpet and came into the venue. First was Zhang Yuanqi, followed by Dalong and Tian Xuetao. Finally Zhang Ye also strolled in casually. This was his first time walking the red carpet and it actually felt quite good. As he slowly walked up to the stage, he waved to the left and smiled to the right at the audience.

Applause was coming from every direction.

Especially from his three sisters who were clapping their hardest until their hands nearly turned a dark shade of red!

"Brother!"

"You are so handsome!"

“Oh!!”

On seeing so many celebrities and even the Heavenly Queen herself walking past them, Cao Mengmeng’s two classmates blushed, feeling as though they were in a dream. They were furiously clapping away too!

The last person to appear was Wang Chengpeng, and as the movie’s director, he received the loudest applause from the audience. As he went up on stage, he took the microphone and made an opening speech. “Thank you everyone. Thank you to our friends from the media, our dear audience and friends for attending the opening premiere of Grandmasters. After ten months of production, with an investment of...”

The proceedings of the movie premiere went on step by step.

The opening address, the actors’ speeches, a media interview, an audience lucky draw, and so on.

When it came to the media interview, Zhang Yuanqi, being a Heavenly Queen, managed it with ease. She had already been through such situations dozens of times, if not at least close to a hundred times. Dalong did not like to speak much to the media as that had always been his character. He quickly ended his interview with just a few words. When Tian Xuetao and the second female lead went up on stage for their part, they looked visibly nervous. Somewhere in the middle of the questioning, Tian Xuetao said something wrong but quickly reacted and changed his answer and

managed to get through the interview. The second female lead nearly fell down when her high heels gave way as she staggered some distance away, scaring many of the audience as they were worried that she would fall off the stage.

The reporters kept focusing their cameras onto them, looking for flaws or mistakes. That was what they wished to see, since if everyone were flawless and behaved perfectly like Zhang Yuanqi, would there would even be any news at all?

Tian Xuetao and the second female lead might be considered quite popular and have acted for quite a number of years already. However, since acting and life were different things, even if they did not get nervous while filming the movie, it wouldn't mean that they would not get nervous when faced with so many people from the media and audience. Moreover, as it was such a big occasion and a big production that they were taking part in for the first time, coupled with their young ages, you could say that their experience in handling this interview segment was definitely incomparable to a mature artist like Zhang Yuanqi's.

They got off the stage and returned to their seats in the front row.

Tian Xuetao was slightly embarrassed and said, "Ai, I was too nervous."

Zhang Yuanqi comforted him like an older sister would and said, "It's not a problem. I was also nervous just now when I spoke." She turned her head to look at the second female lead and asked, "Juan'er, is your ankle alright?"

The second female lead said, “It’s fine, Sister Zhang. I got the wrong size shoes. They’re too big.”

Upon hearing that, Zhang Yuanqi said, “Hur hur, my shoes are coincidentally a little too small for me. They’re size 36. Come, try wearing mine.”

“How can I do that? No, no, no.” The second female lead felt overwhelmed by the attention from the Heavenly Queen.

“I do not have athlete’s foot, so you can wear them without worries.” Saying so, Zhang Yuanqi had already took off her shoes graciously.

When the second female lead saw that, she could only exchange the shoes with her. Feeling very touched, she said, “Thank you, Sister Zhang.”

This scene was captured by some of the reporters who were beside them, but no one was particularly surprised. In the entertainment circle, Zhang Yuanqi had always had good relationships and took especially good care of others. She never had any conflicts with people. Even when those celebrities with poor reputations met Zhang Yuanqi, they would still greet her politely. The reason for that was for all to see, as Sister Zhang always knew how to handle issues, conduct herself personably, and never put on airs.

However, when Zhang Ye saw that, he did not say anything at all.

He knew exactly what kind of character Old Zhang had.

On the stage.

The host smiled and said, “Who’s next?”

Wang Chengpeng looked to his left and called out, “Teacher Zhang, it’s your turn.”

“It’s my turn already? Alright.” Zhang Ye straightened his suit and walked up to the stage with a smile

The host handed the microphone to him.

Zhang Ye took it and said with a smile, “It’s finally my turn, but before the questions start, let me first say a few words.” Zhang Ye stopped a reporter who was just about to ask him something, “Actually there is a profound meaning behind Director Wang’s arrangement for me to be the last one to come up on stage. Someone recently gave me a nickname, calling me the ‘Speech Demon’. They say that there will be trouble the moment I hold a microphone...”

With that, the audience in the house burst out in laughter!

Wang Chengpeng laughed as he pointed to him.

The second female lead was also tickled.

Some time ago, the Peking University incident had caused an uproar and basically everyone knew of that incident. When they heard Zhang Ye self-ridiculing himself the moment he went on stage, everyone thought it was hilarious.

Zhang Ye continued on, “Actually, I do not have any confidence in myself. At this big event today, I had better not say anything wrong again, in case it brings trouble to Director Wang and the film producers. So then, for the questions that our reporters have for me, let’s just make do with one question. One is enough. I’m afraid of getting in trouble if I say too much.”

Everyone laughed again.

The female reporter stood up again and asked, “Alright then, Teacher Zhang, I will only ask one question. Earlier, my fellow reporters have already asked the questions about the movie and its production, so let me ask a private question instead. The character that you portray in the movie is an antagonist who leads a solitary life. What I would like to ask is, are you also like that? Do you have a girlfriend yet? Can you share with us your love life? I believe there are many people who are very concerned about this question. That is all I would like to ask.”

With that, she sat back down.

The audience applauded and whistled enthusiastically, waiting for Zhang Ye to talk about his love life.

Everyone was always interested to know about celebrity gossip and scandals. But unfortunately, those were also what the celebrities were most unwilling to discuss, because it was not easy to answer, and sometimes, there was no way to answer it either. Admitting or denying also did not help, so that was why a question like that at this moment would test the professionalism of a celebrity.

Tian Xuetao looked up to the stage.

The second female lead and the rest of the actors were also waiting to see what Zhang Ye would say.

Zhang Ye smiled and looked at that female reporter before answering, “How is that one question? Your sentence consisted of three questions, and they’re even such blunt questions. Do you have a grudge against me?”

The female reporter smiled and waved her hands.

Zhang Ye said, “Actually my love life is a history of blood and tears!”

Everyone’s interest perked. What do you mean by a history of blood and tears? Hurry up and tell us!

Zhang Ye followed up immediately by explaining further, “I’ve bled! I’ve cried! And I’ve been through [shit](#)!”

The words history and shit are both pronounced as shǐ

When they heard that, the audience and reporters nearly vomited a mouthful of blood. Pfft! There were blood, tears...and even shit? Just how dirty was your love life!

Wang Chengpeng was also spoiled by the humor!

The second female lead even covered her mouth and laughed away heartily!

Zhang Ye stood on the stage and chewed the fat with everyone for some time. Everything he said was getting funnier and funnier and everyone was enjoying listening to him. However if anyone were to think about it, Zhang Ye had actually not said anything related to his love life at all.

After Zhang Ye got off from the stage and returned to his seat.

Dalong glanced at him.

Tian Xuetao also looked over to Zhang Ye.

As the saying goes, actions speak louder than words. Compared to Tian Xuetao's and the second female lead's nervous and mistake-ridden interviews, Zhang Ye's handling of the question was impeccable and of a totally different standard to them. There were no signs of nervousness, and instead, even teased the reporter and himself with ease. Every one of his words carried a little joke in it as he raised the entire atmosphere of the movie premiere.

What was most critical was that he did not even answer the sensitive question and skipped over it skillfully.

This clearly showed the difference between a host and an actor. While an actor's primary job was acting, Zhang Ye was a versatile host who had skills to handle situations both inside and outside of acting!

Chapter 610 – Grandmasters' Box Office Earnings!

After an hour.

The ceremony was done and the movie started playing!

The lights in the venue slowly dimmed after they were switched off before fading out. All the recording equipment was brought outside while the reporters were invited to take their seats as the invited guests and audience watched closely at the screen in Hall 1. Although the premiere and public screening were scheduled on the same day, the opening premiere was screened ahead of the public screening which was scheduled for a later timing. For the selected first batch of viewers watching, their mood was naturally different. The atmosphere in the theater had a sense of grandness to it.

The music started.

This was the melody of the movie theme song that was sung by Zhang Yuanqi. But as it was used for the opening of the movie, there was no singing and only the melody was gently playing to signal the start of the movie.

Starring: Zhang Yuanqi

Starring: Wu Feilong

Featuring: Tian Xuetao

Featuring: Zhang Ye

Zhang Ye's name was the fourth to appear, and considerably near the beginning.

In the introduction, with the flickering images and music playing, Wang Chengpeng's name and introduction as the director appeared the screen and faded out. The scene cut to a group of children who were gathered together.

“My ball! That's my ball!”

“Haha, how dumb.”

“Don't give it to him.”

“Give the ball back to me.”

“Come and get it from us then.”

“I will definitely get it back! Give it back!”

“Ah! How dare you hit us!”

The child character of Dalong's role appeared on screen.

Following that, the child form of Zhang Yuanqi's character also appeared on the bridge. It wasn't known where they found the two child actors, but they really looked quite similar to Zhang Yuanqi and Dalong.

The beginning scenes and plot moved a little slow as they were mainly used to build up the characters' story. About ten minutes into the airing of the movie, the children had grown up. This was where the first conflict in the movie appeared. With a couple of lines, the plot slowly unveiled itself but part of the main plot was still hidden from the audience at this moment.

In the first row in the theater, Zhang Ye was watching intently and enjoying the movie. As he did not follow the film crew from the beginning of production but was thrown in at the end to rescue the situation when the movie was threatened with being taken down, he had not watched the final version of the movie in full. At this premiere, it was his first time watching it and he felt that it was really quite different from what he had expected.

At the 30-minute mark of the movie, Zhang Ye's character finally appeared for the first time!

“Who are you?”

“Guess.”

“Do you know my teacher?”

“It’s your teacher who knows me.”

.....

At the 52nd minute.

“I don’t care where you came from, all I know is where I want to go. Even your master can’t stop me, so who do you think you are? All that’s left of Xingyi Fist now are your teacher and you. How pitiful, how regrettable, and how sad!”

.....

60th minute.

“In this era, who still dares to claim they are grandmasters? Your master can’t claim so, and you, you are even less deserving to claim so!”

.....

74th minute.

“When...I die...my martial arts...cough...will really be lost for good....That’s good, might as well...cough. In birth...we bring nothing....In death, we take away nothing. Hahahaha!” His character died at this moment and even laughed as he went.

Below stage.

Cao Mengmeng was thrilled. “The main character is so evil! Why did he kill my brother!”

Cao Tong also said angrily, “That Dalong is so annoying!”

Cao Dan said in a speechless way, “It’s our brother who is the villain! Sister Zhang and Dalong are the main leads instead!”

Mengmeng’s two classmates said together, “Mengmeng, your brother’s acting is really good!”

Around them, many reporters and film critics couldn’t help looking at each other, surprised by Zhang Ye’s acting quality. Having appeared in scenes together with an experienced action star like Dalong, Zhang Ye seemed to have managed to hold his own and was not put down by Dalong’s acting. He portrayed his character very well. And of Zhang Ye, who was just making his debut in acting, this was a totally unbelievable performance. Everyone knew that Zhang Ye was not a student of the performing arts!

A female reporter took a deep breath and said, “His acting is really good.”

“Zhang Ye’s character is a bright point in the movie! He really got our attention!” a film critic praised.

Another film critic also nodded. “Honestly speaking, I’m really amazed that Zhang Ye’s acting can be so good. The character’s development was done so well too!

“The fight scenes were also well done.”

“Yeah, the fight scenes were beautifully choreographed.”

“It was really well-arranged.”

“Did Zhang Ye use a stunt double?”

“It didn’t look like it.”

“I had thought that Zhang Ye would mess things up, but who knew that I was in for such a surprise! This person could really act well!”

With the antagonist dead, the plot was already at its conclusion. As the scenes went back to Zhang Yuanqi and Dalong’s characters, the movie’s ending played out. Soon, the lights in the theater were turned on and slowly lit up the entire venue.

The credits rolled just as the main theme song started.

Wang Chengpeng along with the main cast stood up and faced the audience, bowing to them once.

The audience and media reporters broke into applause!

“It was really quite good.”

“This movie is more than alright.”

“The box office earnings shouldn’t be too bad. With such a plot, cast, and quality, it should easily get a hundred million RMB in ticket sales. It looks like it has the potential to hit several hundred million at least.”

“Yeah, it’s a really good watch.”

“I only find it alright. There’s not enough screen time for Sister Zhang and that makes her feel like she was just making a cameo, although her acting was really good. But overall, I wasn’t too entertained by it.”

“Tian Xuetao’s acting hasn’t improved at all.”

“Zhang Ye’s performance was quite unexpected.”

“Yeah, I think Zhang Ye’s acting was quite surprising.”

After the movie ended, the audience was still talking in whispering voices, exchanging their views on the movie. Besides Zhang Yuanqi’s and Dalong’s names getting mentioned often,

Zhang Ye's name was also brought up numerous times.

Everyone began streaming out of the venue.

Wang Chengpeng smiled and said to the actors, "Let's go and get ready as well. The internal team celebratory dinner has dragged on for too many days already and it's time to fulfill that today. Everyone has worked hard."

The actors were also talking with each other.

Only Zhang Ye was relatively silent. Compared to when he was acting his role out and when he was watching the movie, he had very different feelings. Overall, Zhang Ye was quite satisfied with his own performance in the movie, but while he was watching Grandmasters as an audience, he noticed some mistakes, such as his expressions and actions, which he felt could be done better. He had also always thought that the martial arts movements were flawed; those dogshit-like moves of "Taiji Fist" were too flamboyant. All in all, he knew that there were many areas in which he could improve. However, whatever! Since this was only his first time acting in a movie, and being inexperienced, to have done what he did was already his limits. He would just have to work harder in the future.

All over the country.

Public screenings of Grandmasters were beginning.

A big name director, a big production, and a big lineup which included Zhang Yuanqi and Dalong helming the cast. There was no lack of Grandmasters being scheduled for screening at every cinema. In just the past two days, tickets for Grandmasters were already 30% booked on the online ticketing systems. On the day itself, in every cinema, the same scenes of huge crowds lining up for tickets could be seen as every movie buff turned up to watch the blockbuster title.

“Yo, Old Sun.”

“Old Xu? You came too?”

“Yeah. Are you here to watch Grandmasters as well?”

“Yes. I’ve been waiting for it for a month already and it’s finally playing now.”

“The opening premiere has just ended, but I’ve already seen the film critics giving their reviews online. It seems like they’re all recommending it, so I came to take a look for myself. I’m mainly here because I want to see Zhang Ye, since I like him better.”

“Whoa, does Zhang Ye know how to act?”

“The film critics say that he’s pretty good.”

“Really? How can that be!”

“I don’t know either. That’s why I’m here.”

“Let’s go. It’s time to go inside.”

One by one, the screenings starting.

One by one, the screenings ended.

On this opening day, the topic regarding Grandmasters was constantly climbing in rank on Weibo. Although a large part of these topics were discussing Zhang Yuanqi or Dalong, there were still quite a number of discussions surrounding Zhang Ye. At least, compared to Grandmasters’ second male lead, Tian Xuetao, he had much more attention!

“Wow, Zhang Ye did really well!”

“Teacher Zhang’s acting skills are so great they blinded my eyes!”

“That final crazed laughter was really the crowning glory!”

“I never would have expected Teacher Zhang’s acting to be so good!”

“@ZhangYe awesome!”

“The movie’s not bad. It didn’t disappoint me!”

“Initially, I had thought that the film crew were left with no choice when they selected Zhang Ye to be the replacement. Who knew that Zhang Ye’s acting was actually this good! He did not screw up at all in this critical moment!”

“I like Zhang Ye’s role of being the villain. From the start, he was already very hateable, I really wished that he would die quickly, but when he really died at the end, I felt somewhat at a loss. I guess it was because of Zhang Ye’s acting that the character came to life for me. What’s more, something worth mentioning here is that Zhang Ye seems well-suited to play such antagonistic roles as well. It felt like he was just being himself. In reality, isn’t Teacher Zhang also the type of person who leaves people gnawing their teeth over him?!”

“Congratulations on your successful debut, Teacher Zhang!”

“Congratulations!”

“Zhang Ye, you’re so handsome! I’ll support you forever!”

Several scattered newspaper reports had also praised Zhang Ye’s acting in Grandmasters while many other film critics were also full of praise for him. Only a few film critics were harsher as they pointed out the problems that Zhang Ye had in his acting. This

outcome was in contrast to before the movie was released. Just a few days ago, many of the media and film critics were full of doubt and questioned Zhang Ye's joining of the film crew for this movie. However, after the movie was released, most of these criticisms were overturned as most of them had now given their approval to Zhang Ye's acting skills.

The next day.

Grandmasters' opening day box office earnings were tabulated: 31 million RMB.

This results were slightly lower than the predictions calculated by the film producer and film crew, but not by much and was still considered acceptable and within estimates. Besides, the reviews of the movie were pretty good. There were also enough commercial opportunities, so the box office earnings after the opening day would not be too bad and even had room to grow.

24 hours later, the second day's box office earnings were released: 38 million RMB. It was actually even higher than the opening day's numbers. Such a situation was not seen often in the market, so it was clear that Grandmasters was garnering better than expected acceptance from the viewers. It belonged to the late-bloomer type of film!

There was no doubt the final box office earnings would cross 100 million!

Crossing 200 million? That was likely too!

As for whether it could join the 300 million box office earnings club, it still remained to be seen, though it was unlikely. However, in the gloom of a market downturn in the film industry, having these results right now was already very good and the film producers had also reached their goals. On this matter, Zhang Ye's contributions were very prominent as he gave such a good performance even under the urgency of a rushed filming schedule. That credit could not be taken away from him!

Chapter 611 – Premiere Episode Of Do You Remember!

On this day.

In the morning.

Zhang Ye was still sleeping and lazing around at home.

In recent days, after the public release of Grandmasters and its rising box office earnings crossing the 200 million mark, the pace of earnings had slowed down by quite a bit due to the issue of piracy. It was no longer rising as fast like before but instead felt as though someone had applied hard brakes to its momentum. The box office earnings had fallen greatly. However, this situation was already expected by the film producers and also something that was unavoidable in the film industry. It had become a normal phase in the lifespan of a movie and highlighted exactly how no movie was spared by the onslaught of piracy.

The box office earnings for Grandmasters were the highest in the country for this month.

Zhang Ye's reputation was also increasing very quickly, together with the pace of the movie. This could be seen from the amount of reputation points he gained as they were being added to his game ring at a rapid pace!

+99!

+276!

+2123!

The points were credited to his game ring!

For Zhang Ye, whose reputation points had all been used up earlier, this was truly a lifesaver, something he needed very badly.

As for Zhang Ye's placing on the Celebrity Rankings Index, there were some movements in the past few days. In the C-list rankings, after having been quiet for some time, he finally took a critical step and moved into the top spot, number one! He was so close to rising to the B-list now!

It wasn't even a step anymore.

More like just half a step away!

With just a little push more, he would surely be able to swap positions with the last ranked celebrity on the B-list rankings. He was only this close from it now!

Ring, ring, ring.

It was almost 11 AM when the phone started ringing!

Zhang Ye was still in dreamland when he suddenly got woken up. Sitting up on his bed, he looked to his left and right, yawning as he searched for his phone. Finally, he found it and picked it up to answer the call. “Who is this?”

It was Dong Shanshan on the other end. She said, “What’s up? Still sleeping?”

“Shanshan?” Zhang Ye asked sleepily. “Yeah, what time is it now?”

“It’s almost 11 AM.” Dong Shanshan laughed and said, “You’re getting really popular these days, are you going to a lot of socializing events too? Why were you still not awake yet at this time? What time did you get home last night?”

Zhang Ye said, “How would I have any social events to attend? You know very well how my relationships with the people in the entertainment circle are, and besides, you also know that I don’t take up commercial performances either. I’ve been staying home for the past two days, waiting and checking my popularity score. Looking at it rising bit by bit makes me feel really good. I was even dreaming about it until you called.”

Dong Shanshan said, “You’ve almost reached the B-list

rankings?”

“Yup, almost. But I don’t know when.” Zhang Ye said conservatively, “There’s still quite a gap between me and the last place person on the B-list, so I might not be able to catch up for sure.”

Dong Shanshan said, “Hur hur. Oh, by the way, I just watched Grandmasters yesterday. The story plot isn’t exactly my type of show with all that fighting and killing, but I must say that your acting is really good. That makes me wonder. We were both in the same class at the same school and taking the same lessons, so why don’t I remember that we were taught how to act in the broadcasting department? Where did you learn acting? You’re even that good at it? Even the fight scenes were done quite well. Did you fight for real?”

Zhang Ye laughed and answered, “I was self-taught, just self-taught.”

Dong Shanshan said, “It’s even doing so well at the box office. You could definitely be considered a movie star now since you’re already a member of the 200 million club.”

Zhang Ye denied it and said, “Oh come on, I was just part of the supporting cast, it doesn’t mean much at all. Besides, this movie was just so-so. I will tell you that, honestly, there are many parts I’m not too satisfied with.”

To someone from this world, Grandmasters might have been a

breath of fresh air to the domestic film market with its high box office earnings, but in Zhang Ye's opinion, he felt that it was still somewhat lacking. It's true that it was pretty enjoyable as a movie, but could it be considered a classic? No, it was far from that. As Zhang Ye did not know how to make movies, he decided that once he knew how to make one and had a chance to become a director, he would definitely bring those classic movies from his world over to this world and make himself the lead actor. He would just film it in the way he liked without anyone daring to correct or criticize his Taiji Fist. When that time came, Zhang Ye would let everyone know what a good movie should be like! As for now, his focus was still on television programs. He did not have any spare time to get into the film industry, at least, not for now.

“How's your program going?” Zhang Ye suddenly asked her.

Dong Shanshan laughed and said, “I actually called to tell you about it. I've already recorded 3 episodes of the program. The first episode will be airing tonight at 9 PM. We've managed to get the next two days of the 9 PM schedule as well, so that means there will be three continuous episodes aired in a row. After that, we'll plan for it to resume the normal schedule starting from next Friday and airing it once weekly.”

Zhang Ye blinked and asked, “Using two days of primetime slots over the weekend as well? Looks like the station is really putting a lot of confidence and importance on this. Sure then, I'll definitely catch it tonight. I've been waiting for it for so long now!”

“Me too, but I wonder what the viewership ratings will be like?”

“They won’t be bad, guaranteed.”

“Hopefully.”

After hanging up, Zhang Ye started to look forward to the program as well. He had really been waiting for the program to air for some time now, especially now when he was also at a critical moment of sneaking up into the B-list rankings. He knew that he needed to drum up his advance and get to the next spot quickly, or else, once the momentum has passed, and if he still could not advance up in the rankings, he would probably have to wait for another time to do it again.

His parents had gone to work and did not prepare any breakfast for him, so Zhang Ye just casually decided to cook some instant noodles, returning back to his days as the “Instant Noodles Hero.” As he ate his noodles, he browsed Weibo to check on the news.

Do You Remember had been promoted for many days now, but the level of discussion among the netizens still wasn’t very high. It felt like, even though there was a bit of focus and attention on the program, it still wasn’t enough.

“The premiere will be tonight?”

“Yes, it’s going to be three episodes broadcasted over three days.”

“Has Beijing Television gone crazy? They’re really putting everything on this, huh?”

“I find it strange too. How could such an odd and idiotic program get promoted so much that they’re even using other primetime programs’ slots to support this lyric memorization show? Do You Remember...just hearing this name alone leaves me kind of speechless. What sort of lousy show is this!”

“Don’t tell me there could be something more to it?”

“The show’s trailer has already been released. It’s just a competition for people to remember lyrics, what more could there be? It’s all mentioned clearly.”

“I don’t think it will be that simple, after all, this is a program made by Zhang Ye. I’m part of the television industry and Zhang Ye’s program production abilities are recognized by any and all of the industry insiders.”

“That is the reason why I am so disappointed with Zhang Ye this time. Your sister, remembering lyrics...I can’t see what’s the selling point at all. If the viewership ratings can surpass 0.1%, they had better burn some incense to thank the gods!”

“Teacher Zhang has almost reached the B-list rankings, so if this show’s viewer ratings turn out well, then he might possibly ride on it together with his popularity from Grandmasters to propel himself into the B-list. But this doesn’t seem like it will be happening anymore now.”

“There’s definitely no chance of it anymore.”

“This show can’t possibly be any good.”

The netizens were mostly negative about the show, Do You Remember.

Following the release of Grandmasters, Zhang Ye’s popularity was currently on a rise. Even though its momentum was already weakening, it was still on the rise, just increasing at a slower rate. This was the reason why Zhang Ye did not know exactly when the moment would happen. Last night, there were already media and news reports that Zhang Ye’s promotion to a B-list celebrity would happen at any moment, but all of that turned out to be nothing. The birth of a new B-list celebrity was not a small matter in the entertainment circle, as after all, at this high level, any move by anyone would be greatly scrutinized. A celebrity at this stage could finally be considered a big shot. Their performance fees and worth would also be doubled from before!

More interesting was that the celebrity in the last spot of the B-list rankings was also a host, a very famous host from Central TV—Chen Ye. His career had mainly been focused around the different channels of Central TV, starting from doing documentary programs in the past, then doing interview programs before moving on to variety and large-scale gala events. He was even one of the hosts of the Spring Festival Gala for the past two years, and by that reason—if he could host the Spring Festival Gala—he was naturally very well-known in the country. In the realm of the A and B-listers, there weren’t many hosts who could reach this level. The number of those who did were easily accounted for with just the fingers on one hand. Chen Ye was precisely one of them.

It was at this moment.

On Weibo, Chen Ye actually posted a reply onto the topic that was promoting Do You Remember: “A show like this would surely not get any viewers, so why would anyone actually produce such a show? What are they even thinking!”

Chen Ye opened direct fire!

Nobody knew whether he had directed this shot at Beijing Television or at Zhang Ye!

Before his reply, this promotional Weibo message was not really getting much attention, but once Chen Ye started something, a number of Weibo users immediately rushed over to observe the commotion!

“Wow, Host Chen has said something!”

“Getting the popcorn ready and watching this!”

“Chen Ye vs Zhang Ye!”

“The battle of the two hosts!”

“This is the storm and assault of the status of a B-list ranking!”

If Zhang Ye were to rise into the B-list rankings, then without question, Chen Ye would be relegated to the C-list. With such a competitive relationship between them, this was the conflict that everyone was paying great attention to right now, especially since Chen Ye had said those words at such a critical period. It definitely did not help to control the netizens appetite for drama as they were all left guessing what would happen next!

“Come and see! Quick, they’re almost fighting!”

“@ZhangYe don’t thank me, just call me a Red Scarf!”

“Zhang Ye is notorious for his bad temper. I wonder what he will say to this or if he’ll even respond.”

“@ZhangYe come and put this person in his place! It’s your turn to stand up!”

“@ChenYe keep stepping on him, well done!”

“@ZhangYe someone is scolding you!”

“@ChenYe your criticism is still not strong enough!”

“Teacher Zhang, get him!”

“Teacher Chen, show him who’s boss!”

Many of these Weibo users kept stirring the pot, some wanting to look at mayhem and others wanting to create trouble. It all boils down to one sentence—a spectator could never get enough of drama!

Chapter 612 – Crossing Half Of China To Sleep With You!

Afternoon.

At home.

When Zhang Ye check his Weibo, he received a barrage of mentions from countless of people. He saw the comment made by that Central TV's Spring Festival Gala host, Chen Ye, and just smiled at it, not bothered at all. He continued doing what he was up to, brewing some tea and lying comfortably on the sofa as he watched a little of the news and then some video clips.

Be bothered by him?

This bro doesn't have that much free time to be bothered!

In the past, as long as anyone doubted or criticized him, Zhang Ye would return to them ten times their doubts and criticisms. But later on, having out-scolded almost everyone, he gradually stopped paying much attention to such incidents anymore. It's not that his temper had changed for the better, just that he understood that some things were meaningless to be bothered by. Back then, when he wasn't well-known or popular, if anyone tried to cast doubt on him, it was considered a big matter, so of course he had to fight against it. However, these days, with his popularity soaring and no longer still a small time celebrity, he knew that the more people who knew about him, the greater amount of criticisms he would get. If he had to reply to everyone who did that, then even if he had

a hundred arms, it wouldn't be enough to fight back. There wasn't such time anyway, but most importantly, even if Zhang Ye did reply them, no one was able to outtalk him. If he won every single time, it would be meaningless, and thus he did not have the motivation to do so. So when he saw this, he just treated it as a laughing matter. This was also Zhang Ye's growth to a higher level.

The netizens were still waiting.

“Where's Zhang Ye?”

“Teacher Zhang, please come out quickly!”

“Someone is criticizing you.”

“F**k, Teacher Zhang has been very quiet on Weibo recently. It's been such a long time since he's had a showdown with someone online. I'm not used to this peace at all.”

“What do you know? Teacher Zhang has been longing for defeat. Having dominated for so long, he has yet to taste defeat but there aren't many worthy opponents that can make Teacher Zhang Ye appear anymore these days.”

“That's sounds right when you put it like that.”

“Haha, the mighty Teacher Zhang.”

“You can’t put it that way. Chen Ye is a Central TV host and has hosted the Spring Festival Gala before. In these past few years, he could be considered one of the most popular celebrities of the hosting world. He was also a graduate from the Media College and would be considered as Zhang Ye’s senior. Let’s not bring in the topic of other industries. Just putting it into context within the hosting world, Chen Ye’s experience and capabilities are way ahead of Zhang Ye’s. No matter how good Zhang Ye is, he still lacks the experience of hosting at Central TV or a satellite channel. I’ll admit that Zhang Ye is a very witty talker and has a great competitive streak, but I still feel that compared to Teacher Chen Ye, he still lags behind by a bit.”

“That’s right, it’s not possible to compare at all.”

“Chen Ye’s also Central TV’s star host!”

“Yeah, I’ve seen many episodes of Chen Ye’s interview show before. That mouth of his is really quick. If Zhang Ye really went at it with him, it would be difficult to predict who would win.”

“Zhang Ye would definitely win. That’s already been proven countless times.”

“I think the victor will be Chen Ye.”

“I have my money on Teacher Chen as well. Many of you think that Zhang Ye is formidable, but that’s because he has never come up against anyone strong enough or another famous host who

depends on their mouths for a livelihood. Teacher Chen is Central TV's star host and that title alone makes him someone to be feared."

"Why isn't Zhang Ye taking the challenge?"

"Is he getting scared?"

The netizens were coming up with all sorts of theories.

Someone even took the effort to set up a Weibo poll to pose the question of who would be able to outtalk the other if Chen Ye and Zhang Ye really did come up against one another. Those who craved nothing short of seeing the world burn immediately cast their votes. Vote by vote, in the end, the results between the two were almost the same. 49% had voted in favor of Chen Ye, while another 49% were rooting for Zhang Ye. 2% of the users had voted for an evenly matched outcome.

Later in the afternoon.

Zhang Ye did not surface amid all these commotions.

However, Chen Ye's fans did not let up on their barrage because of Zhang Ye's non-appearance. Since Chen Ye had already fired the first shot, as fans, they would not while the time away.

"What a lousy program! Remember your sister's lyrics!"

“Zhang Ye has already lost his touch!”

“Why are we even comparing Zhang Ye to Teacher Chen? How laughable!”

“Everyone, go to the search engines and search for Teacher Chen’s name, that will help increase his popularity score. Let’s not let that Zhang guy chase up!”

“Right, forwarding Teacher Chen’s Weibo to increase his exposure!”

Suddenly, Chen Ye’s Weibo updated again. With Zhang Ye ignoring him, he continued firing shots and pointed out: “These days, there are so many singing shows around on the market. It’s understandable that you would try to innovate in this area, and we should also support it, but innovation doesn’t mean that we should go against the conformity of a regular television show. I really don’t know who came up with a lousy program such as the one that focuses on remembering lyrics. Is this done so that they can bring down all the other singing shows together with them?”

Chen Ye’s fans echoed his sentiments widely.

“Ha, it was Zhang Ye who came up with the idea!”

“Teacher Chen has hit the nail on the head with his observations!”

“Zhang Ye’s too full of himself, becoming cocky just because he achieved some results elsewhere!”

“Look, he doesn’t even dare show himself anymore!”

At this moment, a hardcore fan of Chen Ye’s appeared. It was a woman and she had a photo of herself on her Weibo. She wasn’t fat or thin, but her looks were really terrible. With slanted teeth, a pointed chin and barely any eyebrows, her Weibo username was contrastingly named IAmGorgeous77. This person was a very active member of Chen Ye’s fan club and all the other fan club members knew her as Gorgeous.

IAmGorgeous77 said: “I don’t believe that Zhang Ye won’t come out! Teacher Chen Ye, hehehe, could you back me up with some support? I know that you’re very talented, much more so than Zhang Ye.” After those words, there was no more activity from her and no one was sure whether she was communicating in private with Chen Ye.

About ten minutes later.

IAmGorgeous77 suddenly made a surprising move. She publicly posted a picture of herself with her lips puckered up, looking ready to give a kiss, but those thick and twisted lips were really terrible to look at. What followed were some words that left everyone dumbfounded: “@ZhangYe, you’re the skin to my flesh; I am the buttons to your suit; you’re coffee and I am the beans, loving you with all my life is not enough! When I hear you, it moves my heart;

When I see you, I lose myself; When I don't see you, my whole body hurts; Even as I wash my feet, I long for you to be mine! Zhang Ye, come and marry me quicklyyyyyy!"

Many people burst out laughing at this on Weibo!

It's a proposal!

Someone has proposed to Zhang Ye!

It's even such an ugly woman!

Chen Ye's fans were all cramping up from their laughs.

"Hahahaha!"

"Gorgeous is so awesome!"

"Gorgeous77, well done! Disgust that Zhang Ye to his death!"

"This doggerel is so well written! Could it be the work of Teacher Chen Ye? It must be! I've always heard that Teacher Chen Ye's poems are very good! Who says that only Zhang Ye knows how to write poems?"

"Zhang Ye, hurry up and come forward, someone has proposed to you! Hehehehe!"

Somehow, due to some reason, this Weibo post was getting a lot of attention and constantly being forwarded. Many others who did not pay attention to this before were now joining in on the commotion and watching the fun!

At the same moment, Zhang Ye also saw the post. His first reaction was to think that the person must be an idiot, right? Because Zhang Ye had always had ordinary looks since childhood, he never had biased opinions about others who didn't look too good themselves. He even did not like it when others started harping about appearances, but this fan of Chen Ye right now was really quite interesting. She was willing to stand out to let others make fun of her and to be Chen Ye's cannon fodder? It might look like Chen Ye's fans were supporting her, but they were actually just making fun of her. Could she be any sillier than that and not understand the situation, and even "jump" around so happily? There are all kinds of people in this world, some with thoughts that you would never understand in your lifetime.

Seeing the ugly girl's proposal to Zhang Ye getting forwarded with increasing pace, Zhang Ye's fans could no longer bear to watch. They were all jumping up and down in anger!

"This is numbing. We did not care about your words, but you're taking advantage of our silence?"

"Who is this disgusting person!?"

"Proposing? You ****?"

“Chen Ye, a person like you can even be a Spring Festival Gala host? Not only did you not control your fans, you’re even helping them cause trouble? Helping your fan compose doggerel to disgust Teacher Zhang? How crass! With your standard of doggerel, you even dare to think of competing with Teacher Zhang? Just because Teacher Zhang did not bother with your antics, you’re all biting even harder!?”

“It’s just a fight for a B-list spot, does it have to come to this!”

“Chen Ye is a sore loser?”

But it had to be said that Chen Ye’s fans had really achieved their objective. Many people had been riled up by Chen Ye’s ugly fangirl’s proposal to Zhang Ye. Many of them even started asking Chen Ye to help matchmake for them, but of course, most of them were Chen Ye’s fan troll army.

“Zhang Ye, come out quickly.”

“Our Gorgeous77 is a great beauty, lucky you, hahaha!”

There were a few fans who were really behaving with no class, as the calls for a conflict were flaring up.

Chen Ye did not say a single thing all this time. Nobody knew if he was condoning his fans’ actions or just observing the situation, neither did he answer the question of whether he was the one who

wrote the doggerel for IAmGorgeous77. Of course, those in the fan club who knew IAmGorgeous77 also knew that she did not have such a flair for writing.

As the excitement mounted.

Zhang Ye browsed through Weibo while shaking his head. He was increasingly despising the behavior of Chen Ye and his fans. He really did not want to bother them at the beginning, but they kept trying to stir up trouble. Isn't it just a matter of trying to gross someone out? You're too damn funny, did you think that only you know how to gross people out? Proposal?

On Tieba.

Zhang Ye's fan club had already set up camp and were all asking for permission to start battle!

"Teacher Zhang, we have to hit back at them!"

"I'm a girl, let me do it, f**k, I can propose too! I've just taken an even more disgusting picture, so let me go and gross out that Chen Ye and his fans!"

"I'll do it!"

"Don't argue with me, let me do it instead!"

“Which of you guys could possibly be uglier than me? Let me do it instead!”

“Is Teacher Zhang around?”

Suddenly, Zhang Ye appeared in Tieba and said: “I’m here. I’ve already read everything. As everyone here should know, we only abide by one principle—we will not attack unless we are attacked, if we are attacked...we will return the favor tenfold! Comrades, it’s not only them who can come up with poems!”

“Teacher Zhang is finally here!”

“They were really too much! We have to f**k them up!”

Zhang Ye announced: “I just happen to have a poem ready here.”

A few minutes later.

Just when countless other Weibo users were attracted to this commotion between Chen Ye’s fan club’s “attacks” on Zhang Ye, as those fans of Chen Ye were celebrating and enjoying the fruits of their victory, a poem surfaced online. Following that, the poem appeared again when another Weibo user posted it, followed by the third, and so forth. These were all the same poem being posted by Zhang Ye’s fans. Soon enough, a few hundred posts of the same poem had been “dedicated” to Chen Ye!

When Chen Ye saw it, his face turned green!

When Chen Ye's fans saw it, they were all so grossed out that they nearly vomited blood!

.....

This was the contents of the Weibo post:

@ChenYe !

Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You

Actually, me sleeping with you and you sleeping with me is basically the same, not much difference.

It's just the slapping of two bodies, nothing more than the forced blooming of flowers.

Simply through the illusion of spring created by these flowers we mistakenly believe that life has begun anew.

Across half of China, everything is happening: volcanoes erupt, rivers run dry,

political prisoners and refugees abandoned,

elks and red-crowned cranes held at gunpoint.

I braved the hail of bullets to sleep with you,

I pressed endless nights into a single dawn to sleep with you,

countless parts of me ran together and became I to sleep with you.

Of course, there are times when the butterflies lead me astray,

confusing praise for spring.

Yet these

are all the more reason I must sleep with you!

The key to this poem was that it was delivered to Chen Ye by all sorts of people, both men and women. There was even a male fan that went by the name of ZhangYe'sGayGoodFriend who copied IAmGorgeous77's style and sent a picture of himself giving a kiss. He even edited this picture and composited Chen Ye's photo into it and posted it together with the poem Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You. That impact and nauseating effect that rushed at

anyone who saw this Weibo post immediately made them to vomit all over their floors!

Chen Ye's fans were all angered and confused!

“Holy shit!”

“That's such a dick move!”

“What the f**k did it mean by ‘the slapping of two bodies’??”

“I can't take it anymore, I'm going to vomit!”

“Why is there even a guy in there!”

“Those bastards! They're so disgusting, those people!”

IAmGorgeous77: “.....”

Initially, they had wanted to gross out Zhang Ye and his fans to achieve their objective, but who could have expected that they would be grossed out by them instead!?

Many of the netizens who saw this were cheering happily at the turn of events!

“This poem is too brainwashing to read!”

“Godly poem!”

“It’s indeed Zhang Ye! This poem must have been drafted by him!”

“Chen Ye’s fan club have stubbed their toe this time by kicking an iron plate! It’s definite now that Zhang Ye and his fan club’s battle powers on Weibo are indeed more powerful!”

“This incident was actually quite boring to begin with. We can only blame Chen Ye alone for letting water seep into his brains. Look at how it turned out, they got grossed out instead! Well done!”

“This poem’s too damn teasing!”

“Chen Ye, with so many people out there wanting to sleep with you, do you feel pressured?”

“No, if you all read it carefully, f**king hell, this poem does not look like it was just written hastily for fun. It might look pretty retarded, but if you really read and think about it, you’d see that there’s a lot of depth to it!”

“You’re right! This poem really has quite a feel to it!”

“I’ve realized that I’m beginning to fall for this poem!”

”Zhang Ye really knows how to compose all kinds of poems. They’re all really meaningful as well and full of profundity. Compared to him, Chen Ye’s lousy doggerel is truly just a dog fart!”

At this moment, no one on Weibo was focusing on some ugly girl making a proposal anymore. Everyone was swept away by this Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You. It was such a quick turn of events! When Zhang Ye’s fan club posted this poem, it immediately got the attention of countless others and was forwarded by them as well, going viral. Almost instantly, it spread all over Weibo, Tieba, and the other large-scale forums!

“Chen Ye bit off more than he could chew!”

“How did this poem spread so quickly? Oh my God!”

“This would surely deal a blow to Chen Ye’s popularity!”

“Dammit, not even Teacher Chen could do it? He lost as well? There’s already no one left in this country who can stand against Zhang Ye’s march to the top!”

“In a scolding battle, Zhang Ye and his fans are invincible!”

“Yeah, no one can stop them!”

“Chen Ye’s fans were asking for it anyway. Of all the people to

offend, they had to do it to Zhang Ye!”

Only Zhang Ye knew about the origin of this poem. It was by a poet named Yu Xiuhua from his previous world, a farm woman who was given the title of “poet with cerebral palsy.” Because of Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You, Yu Xiuhua became famous throughout China. For a month or two in his previous world, the poem spread all over the internet. Its spread and popularity was known to all!

As for Yu Xiuhua, she was caught in a mire of controversy.

Some people emphasized her disability.

Others claimed that she was a rare breed of poet.

Of these matters, Zhang Ye did not have much of an opinion nor any views about it. The reason he brought out this poem was because he had been incredibly pissed off and disgusted by those people and felt that it just wouldn't be him if he did not retort. Just on Chen Ye's lousy doggerel that wasn't much of a doggerel, a limerick that wasn't a limerick, even flattery would not make it comparable to Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You! How could they compare??

Chapter 613 – Becoming A B-List Celebrity!

From afternoon until night.

The modern poem was spreading virally across the internet!

Although Chen Ye and his management team made an emergency PR response to condemn Zhang Ye, it did nothing to help at all. Countless people were tirelessly forwarding the poem Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You and making a joke out of Chen Ye.

“Hahaha!”

“Teacher Chen is becoming even more well-known now!”

“Chen Ye will become the catchphrase for our gay comrades in the future!”

“That Zhang Ye is so mean!”

“You only know that now? When has Teacher Zhang never been mean before?”

“Why did you all have to provoke him? It’s not like you guys don’t know what kind of person Zhang Ye is!”

“We can’t put the blame on Zhang Ye for this matter. It was Chen Ye who was asking for it, so he deserves what he’s getting now.

Chen Ye and his fans were being low class to begin with anyway!”

“Right, Teacher Zhang is still the classy one!”

“Hehe, why do I like Zhang Ye so much!”

“Comparing Chen Ye to Zhang Ye? So what if he’s a Central TV host! So what if he has hosted the Spring Festival Gala before? If you want to say that Chen Ye has more fans than Zhang Ye, I’d believe it! If you claim that Chen Ye has more experience than Zhang Ye in the hosting world, I’d believe it too! But if you want to compare them on their bickering abilities, then two of Chen Ye would still not out-talk Teacher Zhang! I kept wondering why anyone would even think that Chen Ye had a chance at out-talking Zhang Ye in the first place, why would the votes be so equally split at 49% each? What a bunch of morons!”

“That’s totally true, if you look back at the poll results now, there shouldn’t even have been any doubts as to who’d win it.”

“Yeah, the difference in power is too great.”

“Chen Ye and his fans deliberately tried to mock Zhang Ye, doubting him publicly, and someone even sarcastically proposed to him, coming up with all sorts of trick all day. But Teacher Zhang Ye just randomly came up with a poem and wiped them out just like that! This feels just like one of the phrases in Zhang Ye’s poem from the past: ‘With humor, he helped see to that the masts and sculls of Wei’s navy go up in smoke and ashes turn into’!”

“Just now, someone even mentioned that Chen Ye’s literary standards were comparable to Zhang Ye’s? I totally laughed at that. Just who gave such confidence to these people! Just look at the lousy stuff that Chen Ye came up with, then have another look at the poem that Teacher Zhang wrote. I am a student in a Literature Department at my school and this poem might feel very vulgar on the first read, not looking like a proper modern poem, but let me tell you all something, that is what a layman would see it as. Read it with care, line by line and word by word. In my opinion, this ‘sleep with you’ is just like a coat, and an artistic convergent for the whole poem. This poem really expresses something on another level of understanding. Volcanoes are erupting, rivers are running dry, political prisoners and refugees are abandoned, elk and cranes held at gunpoint; just looking at those phrases makes it very clear that there’s an element of societal reflection, and even an environmental message, and to sum it all up, it uses ‘sleep with you’ to draw it all in. This is such an artistic and high-level modern poem. Teacher Zhang Ye’s literary standards are not something that people like you all, who only know how to use doggerel and limericks, could understand. Teacher Zhang could just randomly throw out a poem and the depth and profundity in it would all be lost on you all!”

Zhang Ye’s fans were gaining strong momentum!

Because of the viral spreading of this poem, Zhang Ye’s popularity was rising again, pulling the gap between him and Chen Ye even closer than before.

Chen Ye’s fan club dispersed quickly as their morale took a serious blow, however a number of them still continued to refuse to back down.

“What are you all showing off for!”

“So what if he can write poems? Is that a big deal?”

“Wait and see about the lyrics memorization program! Beijing Television will surely pay a heavy price for believing in Zhang Ye’s program plan! They will definitely lose their claim as the big brother of satellite channels in the north!”

“Right!”

“Wait for the great reveal of the downfall tonight!”

“If that lousy show’s viewership ratings can pass 0.2%, then I will twist my head off!”

“Hur hur, I’m guessing even if you set it at 0.1%, you still would not need to twist your head off! So don’t set it at 0.2%!”

In the end, the focus was back to the program Do You Remember. This round of scolding battles had started because of it, so naturally it must end with it as well. Everyone was waiting for a conclusion as to whether Chen Ye could safeguard his ranking or if Zhang Ye would usurp his position and rise up into the B-list rankings. The outcome hung on this show’s performance.

After dinner.

His mother was picking her teeth with a toothpick when she asked, “Son, did you get into a war of words with others again this afternoon?”

Zhang Ye who volunteered to do the dishes today said from the kitchen, “Whoa, you even know about that?”

“I heard people talking on the bus when I was on the way home. What happened?” his mother asked.

Zhang Ye sighed and said, “It’s about the program that I planned for Beijing Television. It’s premiering tonight but no one believes that it will be good, so there were a bunch of people who came to insult me.”

His father who was reading the newspapers said, “It’s airing today?”

“Yeah, at 9 PM,” Zhang Ye said.

His mother said, “Actually, when I saw the show’s trailer, I didn’t feel that it would be interesting either. Remembering lyrics? There’s no requirement of skill in that at all.”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “Just wait and watch it tonight then.”

At 8:50 PM.

Zhang Ye's parents were both seated in front of the television and waiting for the show to start.

At the same time, all over the country, many viewers were also waiting in front of their TVs and tuned in to Beijing Television. Before this, there was hardly any attention given to this program, but after the scolding battle in the afternoon, the news surrounding Do You Remember was stirred up a little as well. It attracted many curious viewers, most of whom were not exactly expecting the show to be any good, but just watched anyway because they wanted to know what the program was about, to see it in its true form. Even Chen Ye, along with his fans and those “foes” of Zhang Ye were waiting to watch the program. People like crosstalk actor Tang Dazhang and the Beijing Writer's Association's Meng Dongguo were also watching Do You Remember simply for the reason of seeing how bad it would turn out. They were all watching with the hopes of laughing at the quality!

Counting down.

Three minutes...

Two minutes...

One minute...

The music played first then the program officially began broadcasting!

On screen, the lights in the studio flashed and the outstanding stage effects began. In the large studio, more than a hundred live audience members had turned up and were cheering in unison. With the dynamic music and opening dance, the atmosphere in the venue had been charged up and lighted up the whole stage as two hosts, a man and a woman, walked on!

“Good evening everyone!” The male host who was dressed in a suit was called Gao Ge.

Meanwhile, Dong Shanshan was dressed in a evening gown, not the type of evening gown one would wear for a red carpet event, just a modest one that was more suited for a lesser occasion. Her thighs were rather exposed and it made her look very sexy. However, possibly due to the male host’s height, she did not wear high heels of eight centimeters but only an orange pair of high heels around five or six centimeters.

Dong Shanshan smiled very charmingly as she said, “Friends who are with us in the live audience and those of you who are at home in front of your television, good evening to all of you!”

Gao Ge was also in high spirits as he did the introduction. “Welcome, everyone, to the newly minted variety program brought to you by our sponsors, Hua Mei Shampoo and proudly produced by Beijing Television: Do You Remember!”

Dong Shanshan continued his lines, “This is a program where the entry barriers are the lowest in the country, with the simplest of rules, which only stands at one: whoever can sing the lyrics correctly. We’re not looking for good voices or stage presence, we don’t care if you’re pretty or handsome, or neither, all we want to know is who has a better memory. As long as you can correctly sing the designated lyrics, you’ll win! So what are you all still waiting for? Quickly come and sign up to take part now!”

Gao Ge said, “I am your host, Gao Ge!”

“And I am also your host, Dong Shanshan!” It was obvious that Dong Shanshan had more lines than Gao Ge and was probably something that was arranged by Hu Fei and Beijing Television, giving special care to Dong Shanshan.

At home.

His mother’s eyes brightened. “Is that your classmate?”

Zhang Ye nodded. “Yes.”

His father looked at the television and said, “I think I saw her before—when we attended your graduation ceremony.”

“Yeah, she was one of the graduate representatives and made a

speech too,” Zhang Ye said.

His mother looked a little odd, as she kept staring at Dong Shanshan on screen and did not blink at all. Then, she said, “This girl looks quite good, she’s really pretty. Son, does she have a boyfriend yet?”

Zhang Ye said, “Whoa, what are you thinking about?”

His mother said, “I’m not thinking about anything, I’m just asking.”

“Probably not.” Zhang Ye said, “At least that’s what she said. But to be honest, her words are not very trustworthy and I don’t think most of what she says is true either.”

His mother immediately asked, “There are no developments between the two of you?”

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and could not be bothered with her anymore.

His father commented, “Don’t keep trying to mess around. Our son will know what to do.”

His mother did not like hearing that, so she said, “What do you mean by ‘messing around’? Look at our neighbor Little Wang. He has only just graduated from university and he’s already going to get married soon.”

His father rebuked, “Why don’t you talk about the other neighboring unit’s Little Sun. He’s about to get a divorce.”

“Old Zhang! Are you bent on singing a different tune from me?” his mother said angrily.

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “Keep it down, you two. Can we just watch the show now?”

On TV.

The core segment of the program had started!

A very normal looking male lead singer was standing on stage and singing a classic oldie while Dong Shanshan was among the audience, moving around. When the lead singer stopped singing, she would point the microphone to a seemingly random audience member to let them pick up from where the lead singer left off at. If they got the lyrics correctly, they would win the right to take part in the competition.

The song’s title was Just Yesterday.

This was a song by an old singer who had already passed away. It was a classic folk song.

“Just yesterday, you were on the horizon, walking to me with a

smile.”

“Just yesterday, you were facing me, your eyes looking sweet.”

“Just yesterday, you were beside me, gently leaning on my shoulders.”

“Just yesterday, you were behind me, slowly caressing my face.”

His mother was already humming along to the song, “Just yesterday, you were on the horizon...” singing with a slightly out-of-tune melody.

His father sighed emotionally. “This is a very old song, I could still sing it when I was younger, but I have totally forgotten the lyrics now.”

“Don’t lie.” His mother belittled and stepped on his claims, “You were tone-deaf since childhood, how would you be able to sing it?”

After the song ended and six contestants were chosen, they were all invited onto stage by Gao Ge and Dong Shanshan to officially begin the competition round.

Zhang Ye was still unfamiliar with the songs from this world. He did not know any of those that were performed at all. This was the reason why he did not pay attention to it but was only observing at Dong Shanshan’s performance instead. He thought it was rather good. She did not look like she was nervous due to her small-timer

reputation or never having hosted at a major satellite channel before. She was indeed worthy of being one of the top graduates from Media College in their year. As her old classmate, Zhang Ye knew her quite well and had never doubted her abilities at hosting. Some people judge her to be just a “vase,” but it was true that she had really good looks and a great figure, distracting others from her job abilities. So even though she had a pretty face and a nice figure to her advantage, it was also her weakness. She did not lack the ability, she just lacked a chance like this!

Dong Shanshan said, “Alright, let’s begin with the first contestant.”

Gao Ge said, “Are you ready?”

The first female audience said, “I’m ready!”

Gao Ge laughed and said, “The next song is going to be really great. It’s an early work by the Heavenly Queen, Zhang Yuanqi, and very difficult to sing.”

Dong Shanshan said, “The title of the song is Please Look at Me. Over to our lead singer, Little Hai.”

The music began. At the side of the stage, the second lead singer picked up the microphone. This lead singer looked very handsome and had quite a good voice as well. When he started singing, all the audience members cheered loudly.

“Please look at me. Is this the person you loved so deeply? Why, when you were in your hardest times, did she turn to go.”

“Please look at me. Is this the friend you trusted so much? Why, when you were down on your luck, did he never look back.”

“Please look at me. Is this the you who you liked so much?”

At this point, the lead singer, Little Hai made a gesture and the camera view switched to the contestant.

The female audience was clearly familiar with this song. She immediately continued from where it was left off, “—Why do I have nothing, even though I tried my most!” Although she did not sing it well, she had gotten the lyrics right!

“Congratulations!”

“You got it right!”

The show continued from there.

Zhang Ye looked at his mother and asked, “Mom, what do you think?”

His mother who was still focusing on the screen, humming along. She absent-mindedly asked, “What do I think about what?”

“The show of course. Didn’t you say it didn’t interest you?”
Zhang Ye said.

His mother just nodded and said, “It wasn’t interesting from the trailer and previews, but not bad when you watch it. Compared to all those singing competition programs these days, it’s much more interesting!”

On the internet.

On Weibo, some voices also stirred.

“Did anyone watch Do You Remember?”

“I caught it. Damn, it was actually much better than I expected!”

“Is that so? I thought it was only alright.”

“It’s really nice. My brother and I were singing along for most of the time. Did you all hear the second contestant? He’s not even half as good as me. If I joined, I’d definitely do much better! No way, I have to register for it soon!”

“This quality of this program is really high!”

“So this is how you can make a variety show out of remembering

lyrics? Zhang Ye is indeed Zhang Ye! Who says that he has lost his touch? Who says that his program will be a failure?”

“How strange is this! We knew the rules of this show early on, and the content of the show was exactly the same as the promotional preview. There’s no change at all to the core of the program which emphasized remembering the lyrics, so what happened? I did not look forward to this show at all before, but why do I find it so enjoyable after watching it?”

“Yeah, I was wondering about that too. Just what is so interesting about this show? There shouldn’t be any at all. Only one of the lead singers was quite good looking. Although the female host is quite sexy and pretty, she’s still a rookie and I’ve never even seen her before. The contestants on the show are also pretty bad at singing. Just look at this fourth contestant singing totally off-key. The stage equipment is not exactly the most well-equipped either and overall the whole show looks pretty low end, but...I just can’t keep myself from enjoying this damn show!”

“This show’s rules just needs you to remember the lyrics, but that’s not its selling point! This show is not like your traditional singing competition program. It’s selling point is pretty concealed, like how the show looks really low end, but is in fact really at a high standard!”

“Well done!”

“The viewership ratings will be difficult to predict!”

“Right, the viewer rating is a question mark right now. It might not really be that bad at all!”

“We’ll know when we see the results tomorrow.”

“I’m not gonna talk about this here for now, I have to go watch the show! It feels really relaxing to sing along while watching. After such a hard week at work, it feels kind of refreshing to be able to watch a show that can help me to relax.”

Soon after.

The show finished airing and the first episode of Do You Remember ended successfully.

Zhang Ye’s parents went to wash up before heading to bed, while Zhang Ye did not turn in yet. He was back in his room, checking on the internet for everyone’s comments. At about 11:50 PM, when he knew that the day’s viewership ratings would be released internally to the stations, he gave a call to Hu Fei.

The call connected.

Hu Fei said: “Little Zhang, I knew you’d call.”

Zhang Ye laughed: “Yes, it’s my program proposal, of course I’d be concerned about the results. So how did it do? Are the viewership ratings released yet?”

Hu Fei said: “They were just released.”

“How much?” Zhang Ye asked.

Hu Fei said: “Hur hur, guess.”

Zhang Ye thought for a moment before saying: “The first episode is surely not going to be very high. This kind of a program is the type that will get popular only after a while and will be more apparent when we hit the third episode. I guess the 50 cities’ viewership rating is 0.5%?”

Hu Fei laughed heartily and said: “That’s a bit short. The draft report I have for the 50 cities’ viewership rating for the first episode of Do You Remember is 0.63%! It’s second place for the same time period in the entire country!”

Zhang Ye smiled and said: “Good then. It surpassed the estimates by quite a bit!”

Hu Fei said: “To be honest, I didn’t expect such a result either. Such an auspicious start to the first episode will surely boost the station’s confidence in this program. Our team feels the same, and for the next episode, we have confidence that the ratings will be even better. Little Zhang, most of the program team is still at the office right now. We were all waiting for the viewership ratings to be released. Now that it has, we’re all getting ready to go to supper to celebrate the good results. Why don’t you join us too?”

“Forget about me.” Zhang Ye said: “I only gave the proposal and was not involved in the production. Since I did not contribute to the show, I don’t think I should join in the celebrations.”

Hu Fei said: “Hur, since when did you become so modest? I’m not used to you being like this at all!”

The next day, the viewership ratings for the premiere episode of Do You Remember were released.

When the viewers saw the ratings, without exception, everyone was astonished!

“Ah?”

“Did they get it wrong?”

“0.63%? How did it get so high?”

“It’s only their premiere episode!”

“It should be right. This show was really enjoyable to watch!”

“Second for the same time period in the entire country? Compared to another satellite channel’s singing program, its

viewership ratings are only 0.06% lower? Beijing Television has put out a killer program this time!”

“My eyes have been blinded!”

The people who saw these statistics were all dumbfounded.

There were also many people who did not watch the show last night and were thus left scratching their heads. A show that had been acknowledged by everyone as a rubbish program that had no hopes: how did it receive such an illogical viewer ratings figure? If this was only for the premiere episode, then wouldn't the viewership ratings for the later episodes get even higher?

“What's going on?”

“What's the matter?”

“Who can update me on what's happening here? Did Do You Remember create a miracle?”

Someone answered: “Why don't you guys just watch the show first? There's a video of yesterday's episode on Beijing Television's official website. Go take a look and you'll know why. The viewer ratings it had are really not that surprising at all!”

Zhang Ye's fans were also stirred up and getting lively with the viewership ratings released.

“@ChenYe !”

“Teacher Chen, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“Teacher Chen, please make a speech about your thoughts!”

“Who was the one who said that if Do You Remember gets a viewership ratings of more than 0.2%, he would twist off his head? Come forward now, it’s time to show us your circus performance by twisting your head off.”

“Waiting.”

“Waiting for the head twisting performance.”

“Waiting +10000!”

There’s a saying that goes: “He who handles vermillion will be stained red, and he who touches ink will be stained black.” Zhang Ye’s character could be considered a little mean, and among his fans, there weren’t many that were pushovers either. They all jumped out together to do some face-smacking, riffling out some of those who had doubts about Zhang Ye’s program planning abilities from before on Weibo and mentioned those public figures one by one.

“@TangDazhang, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“@MengDongguo, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“@ChenYe’sFirstAunt, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“@ChenYe’sSecondUncle, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“@ChenYe’sPrimarySchoolTeacher, what’s your opinion on this matter?”

“@ChenYe’sSecondUncle’sWife’sNephew’sGrandma’sThirdAunt’ what’s your opinion on this matter?”

Especially towards Chen Ye, Zhang Ye’s fans were being all fanciful and invented all sorts of non-existent user handles related to Chen Ye, particularly having fun while doing so. They were all being their terrible selves!

Chen Ye’s fans nearly fainted from anger in this onslaught!

They’re pushing this too far!

They’re totally pushing this too far!

However, in the face of the viewership ratings for Do You Remember, they could not muster up a response. This statistic was the real thing and even if there were some minor inaccuracies, it would not affect it by much!

On the same day, some online media outlets had also started reporting on this matter.

“Do You Remember—Great success on both fronts: well praised and popular with the viewers! ”

“This year’s big winner amongst singing competitions!”

“A singing competition program that subverts all traditional singing competition programs!”

“The legend of Zhang Ye’s program planning abilities keeps going!”

“A crossing of swords between Chen Ye and Zhang Ye, who would be the victor?”

“Dong Shanshan: new star in the hosting world!”

On the second night, the second episode of Do You Remember was aired as planned.

On the third day, the viewership ratings for the second episode were published: Do You Remember’s second episode’s 50 cities’ viewership rating—0.75%! Number one in the country for the same time period!

The next day, the third episode's viewership ratings were revealed!

Do You Remember's third episode's 50 cities' viewership rating—0.81%! It retained its number one spot in the entire country!

In just three short episodes, Beijing Television's new program segment had unexpectedly dominated Friday's primetime slot. In the current low of a market saturated with traditional singing competition programs, a show that had somehow managed to lead way ahead in the same time period ratings was something that not only the audience could not have expected, their industry peers, the media, and even Beijing Television Station itself...had not thought it was possible!

It greatly exceeded all estimates!

Seeing the viewership ratings rise like a rocket launched, it felt dreamy!

This was a proposal that was simply given out by Zhang Ye casually? These were the abilities of the television industry's legendary program planner?

On the night of the third episode's broadcast.

Just as the interim viewership ratings for the third episode were released, the Celebrity Rankings Index was also updated. Zhang

Ye's name was no longer listed in the C-list rankings, while in his place, a new name had appeared in the first spot. That name belonged to the famous host of Central TV, Chen Ye!

In this moment, at midnight.

Zhang Ye had quietly been promoted into being a B-list celebrity!!

Chapter 614 – Reporters From Nationwide Clog The Gates!

In the morning.

The day had just begun and congratulatory calls were arriving one after another.

The first call came from Yao Jiancai.

Yao Jiancai said: “Old bro, are you still sleeping?”

Zhang Ye replied: “Old Yao?”

Yao Jiancai continued: “I have seen the change in your ranking!”

Zhang Ye said: “Yeah, I finally sneaked onto the B-list rankings.”

Yao Jiancai said: “Finally? Don’t put it like you have already put in so much effort, since you’ve only debuted for a year or so. In the entertainment industry, who else has can have it so smooth sailing like you. Just look at your old bro here. Including my time in the crosstalk world, I have been working in this industry for more than twenty years, but where’s my popularity? I don’t even have a fifth of your success!”

Zhang Ye replied: “Yup, well said.”

Yao Jiancai said: “—Stop being irritating. Come out for a meal when you’re free?”

Zhang Ye said: “OK, I’ll go if you’re treating.”

Yao Jiancai said: “My treat? You’re really such a miser!”

The second call came from Dong Shanshan.

Dong Shanshan said: “Hello, may I know if this is Teacher Zhang? I’m sales agent 123 from the insurance company. I’ve heard that you have recently become a B-list celebrity. Our company is worried that your heart is unable to take this surprise, so we’ve specially launched an insurance policy, going for only 998! It’s only 998!”

Zhang Ye said: “Man, if I didn’t see the caller ID, I would’ve hung up. I couldn’t tell who it was on the phone at all when you were talking with a high-pitched voice.”

Dong Shanshan said: “Hur hur, congrats.”

Zhang Ye said: “I should congratulate you too.”

Dong Shanshan said: “I don’t have anything to be congratulated on.”

Zhang Ye said: “Oh c’mon, I know that you are also getting really popular now.”

Dong Shanshan said: “Is that so?”

Zhang Ye said: “After the third episode of Do You Remember, I saw on the internet that someone had already given you a nickname: Goddess of Otakus. You already have your own fan club now?”

Dong Shanshan said: “I guess so. It was formed by the fans themselves.”

Zhang Ye lamented: “Hai, having long legs is really an advantage.”

Dong Shanshan said: “I can’t be compared to you when you’re the one who’s secretly become a B-list big shot. Although we were both from the same class, our gap is too great. From now on, I have to look up to you in admiration.”

Zhang Ye said: “I’ll keep a low profile.”

The third caller was Tian Bin.

Tian Bin said: “You defy all logic!”

Zhang Ye laughed: “Haha.”

Tian Bin said: “It’s been really busy over here at Central Radio Station recently. After being busy for over a month, I only came to know about it when I watched the news in this morning. Good god, you’re already a B-list celebrity? How did that happen? How did you do it so quickly? I remember that you didn’t even have a proper job in recent times? So how did your popularity rise by so much?”

Zhang Ye said: “Hai, after the Peking University incident, my popularity score went up by a lot. Later, I took part in a movie and also helped Beijing Television plan a new program.”

Tian Bin said: “I really don’t know what I can say to that.”

On the other end, Tian Bin’s wife’s could be heard saying: “Teacher Zhang, congratulations to you.”

Zhang Ye: “Ai, thank you, sister-in-law.”

Afterwards, there were calls from Hu Fei; skit actress, Ci Xiufang; Wang Xiaomei from the radio station; Zhang Yuanqi’s agent, Fang Weihong; Peking University’s Chinese Department’s Su Na; the publishing firm’s Li Mei; and even Dean Pan of the Peking University School of Mathematical Sciences; etc. The only regret was the person whom Zhang Ye wanted to hear most from did not call him. Actually, Zhang Ye could call her but he did not want to disturb Old Wu’s rest as she had been very busy at work.

He got up and went to wash up.

Zhang Ye did not feel sleepy anymore after getting so many calls and was unable to fall back asleep. Thus, he went out to have the breakfast that had turned cold which his parents prepared earlier before they went to work.

Ding dong.

The doorbell rang.

Zhang Ye, feeling a little suspicious, went over to open the door.

A young man dressed in work attire was standing outside the door and holding a bouquet of flowers in his hands, said, “Hello, are you Mr. Zhang Ye? This is your...ah!” That person was stunned and continued, “You’re...you’re Teacher Zhang Ye? These flowers are for you. Please sign to receive them.” Although there was a name indicated on the delivery order, the name of Zhang Ye was far too common. This young man never expected this Zhang Ye that he was delivering to would actually turn out to be the Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye signed for the delivery order and asked, “Who sent this?”

The young man hurriedly said, “The delivery order indicates it was from a Madam Wu but no full name was given.”

Zhang Ye knew who it was, so he said, “OK, thank you then.”

The young man quickly replied, “You’re welcome, too welcome, no need to thank me.”

When the door closed, Zhang Ye looked at the flowers in his hands with mixed emotions. It being sent so early in the morning clearly meant it was not ordered at the last minute. His ranking update had only been released at 12 AM last night. If the flowers weren’t ordered by Wu Zeqing last night, then Old Wu must have ordered in advance but did not fill in the delivery timing until the moment Zhang Ye became a B-list celebrity. Ever since Old Wu became the deputy chief of SARFT, her workload became increasingly heavy. Zhang Ye knew this as, when they were on the phone sometimes, Old Wu would still be working as she chatted with him. But even though she was so busy, Old Wu still thought about him, and this made Zhang Ye feel really touched.

Without any more hesitation, he made a call to her.

The call went through and Zhang Ye said: “Are you awake yet?”

“I just woke up.” Old Wu’s voice sounded very gentle and cheerful.

Zhang Ye laughed: “I got your flowers. Hai, how can I be the one receiving flowers from you first when I have never even sent you any before. I feel so embarrassed. I should have sent some to you first.”

Old Wu laughed: “It doesn’t matter who sends to whom first, do

you have to be so clear about such things with me?” She let out a lazy yawn and then asked: “Have you eaten yet?”

“I just finished the fried breadsticks my parents left for me.”

“Was it hot or did it already turn cold?”

“It had already turned cold.”

“In the future, don’t eat anything that has turned cold. It’s bad for the stomach.”

“Sure, I’ll listen to you.”

“Hurry up and drink some warm water to ease your stomach.”

“OK, I will.”

“Go and drink first. We’ll talk again later.”

“Alright then.”

Old Wu was the kind of woman who knew just how to take good care of others. She was also very gentle and would dote on and respect others. It was probably only such a woman who could capture his heart. Zhang Ye would often lose his temper with other people, but with Old Wu, Zhang Ye felt a sense of calm whenever

he was in her presence.

In the morning.

After watching the news for a while, Zhang Ye decided to go for a jog as he had not exercised in many days. He had already reached his goals ahead of time and whatever work that needed to be done was also done. Since there were no new job offers at the moment, the only thing left that he could do was training himself up and doing some self-cultivation while hoping for good news.

He met some of his old neighbors at the corridor.

“Little Ye, you’re already up?”

“Yeah, Auntie.”

“You’ve really made us proud. I heard that you already became a B-list celebrity!”

“It’s all thanks to everyone’s help. I’d be a nobody if not for all of you.”

“Heh, look at our Little Ye, how eloquent he is!”

“Where are you going?”

“I’m going for a jog, get some exercise.”

“Then you have to be careful. When we were buying our groceries earlier, we saw between ten and twenty reporters in the district. There was also an interview van from the television station outside. They’re blocking the path to the gate.”

“Really?”

“Hur hur, be careful and don’t get surrounded.”

“I understand, Grandma Zhou, thanks.”

Chapter 615 – A Short Poem From [Bingxin!](#)

That morning.

Caishikou, in the district of Zhang Ye's parents' house.

Xiaoxue was riding her scooter, a bag that was carrying her interview equipment slung over her back. She rode her scooter at lightning speed, rushing to her destination, her hair a mess from the wind. She finally spotted the gates to the district community and quickly pressed the brakes. She could see many other media colleagues carrying their cameras camped outside the gates too. There were reporters from the Beijing Times, Beijing Evening News, a correspondent reporter from a Beihe province, as well as reporters from the China Youth Daily newspaper.

Whoa, there were so many people here?

She felt done for, knowing that she would not be able to get the interview for sure!

With a bunch of people blocking the gates, would Zhang Ye even make an appearance?!

Xiaoxue got off her scooter listlessly. She didn't hold much hope in the first place when she got delegated with the task this morning at the newspaper firm, knowing that she was unlikely to get a chance to interview Zhang Ye at all. She was an entertainment news reporter, and although only a newbie with half a year under her belt, she had been through all kinds of major

and minor interview experiences. She knew the the difficulties of being an entertainment news reporter. Even though it was easy to interview some celebrities because of the fact that those were the small timers, those interviews were in fact quite worthless and wouldn't make it to a good spot in the newspapers. If they wanted their interviews to be on the front or second page, then they had to interview the big shots, as only a big time celebrity would have news worth reading. However, what was the concept of a B-list celebrity? That was equivalent to celebrities who were well-known throughout the country. Scoring an interview with a celebrity that was B-list and above would be good to have but hardly ever guaranteed. You'd have to stay alert to the news, have a way, get tips, be focused, and have a strategy. It even encompassed good communications skills, sometimes needing to scale a wall or climb a building, using whatever means possible, before you might end up getting a chance to interview a big shot celebrity in unofficial circumstances. It was as difficult as climbing into the heavens.

“Xiaoxue!” A middle-aged man called out to her.

Xiaoxue locked her scooter, then ran to him and greeted, “Brother An.”

Brother An, lugging a camera around, said, “Why are you so late?”

“My scooter broke down on the way, sorry about that, Brother An,” Xiaoxue said apologetically.

Brother An brushed it off and just said, “Come quickly, find a spot for yourself. If Zhang Ye or his parents come out, we will take

the chance to squeeze inside with the crowd. We must definitely get a good spot, so hurry up!”

Xiaoxue said helplessly, “Surely Zhang Ye won’t come out, right?”

Brother An asked back, “Why not?”

“He’s already a big shot now. How is it possible that he will accept an interview so casually? Besides, this address might not even be the right place. If this address was known to everyone in the media, would Zhang Ye still be staying here?” Xiaoxue questioned.

Beside them, an older man who was a cameraman for another newspaper firm laughed and said, “Miss, are you new?”

“Ah?” Xiaoxue looked over to him.

Flanking him, a female reporter who looked to be in her forties also said, “If you want to get an interview with other A-or B-list celebrities in an unofficial and unscheduled location or timing, it would practically be impossible. Even if it were a C-or D-list celebrity, that wouldn’t work. But Zhang Ye is different. He has never avoided the cameras before. If we’re talking about the easiest D-list and above celebrity to score an interview with, then Zhang Ye has to be the easiest. As long as we don’t meet him while he’s in a bad mood, or knock on his house door and disturb him from his daily life, then as long as you went to interview him, he will give you a few words at the very least.”

Xiaoxue said in surprise, “It’s that easy to get a word from Zhang Ye? I’ve seen the news reports of him having a very bad temper, frequently scolding people here and there.”

The female reporter smiled and said, “As long as you don’t provoke him, Zhang Ye’s easier to speak with than you can imagine. He—he is really quite different from the rest of the celebrities in the entertainment circle.”

Brother An added, “He is very different!”

Suddenly, someone shouted!

“He’s coming!”

“He came out!”

“There’s Zhang Ye!”

“Quick, quick, quick!”

“Teacher Zhang!”

As if a gust of wind had swept past, with a single sound, over 20 of those media reporters had already rushed up. Brother An was also one of them. However, Xiaoxue was a step too slow, so she had to rush up to try to squeeze into the crowd.

Zhang Ye had a white towel hanging around his neck and had appeared jogging out from the building's corridor. He had only jogged for about 20 meters before he was surrounded by a group of reporters and could not move anymore. Zhang Ye helplessly stopped there and greeted, while waving to them, "I've hardly had a chance to do morning exercises anymore, so would everyone please be so kind as to let me go for a round first?"

The female reporter from before said, "Teacher Zhang, I've been here since 5 AM and I'm almost about to fall asleep already. Why don't you spare us a few minutes of your time first instead?"

A young female reporter said, "That's right, Teacher Zhang. If I don't get to interview you today, I won't be able to go back to answer to my superiors. I would surely tick them off."

If it were other celebrities, it would have been possible to make an appointment to interview them and there wouldn't be a need to crowd around outside the gates like now. However, Zhang Ye was different in that he did not have an agent or a managing agency at all. At the moment, he did not even have a job, so that resulted in the media group having communication problems with him. On top of the fact that Zhang Ye's promotion into the B-list rankings came at an unexpected time, having shot up suddenly at the turn of the clock last night, these media reporters did not have enough time to do their preparations either. Those were the reasons for their rowdy presence this morning as everyone rushed over to this place. Besides, such interviews were better done the day of, since the matter happened on this day as well. If all interviews followed an order, time, and location, then it would only be reported on a few days later. By then, it would have been 800 years too late.

Could news still be called news if it was old?! News always focused on being delivered in a timely manner.

The crowd of reporters were speaking in chattering voices.

Since Zhang Ye could do nothing about it, he simply agreed and said, “Alright then, just five minutes. Shoot.”

Xiaoxue: “.....” What the! Zhang Ye was really this easy to speak to?

Brother An reacted the quickest. Just as Zhang Ye finished speaking, he had already started, “Teacher Zhang, in the latest update of the Celebrity Rankings Index, you’ve become a B-list celebrity, so I would like to congratulate you first.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Thank you.”

Brother An went on, “There’s a lot of people talking right now, saying that you’re one of the fastest rising celebrities in recent times, turning from an unknown into a B-list celebrity in little more than a year. It feels like this is a route that many other public figures would not be able reach, but you’ve done it in just the blink of an eye.”

“Blink of an eye?” Zhang Ye repeated the words.

A Huadong Daily News reporter interrupted and asked, “I wonder if you have seen it yet; there were a lot of netizens who left

their comments online after the rankings were updated at midnight yesterday. Other than congratulatory comments, there were also many criticisms and doubting comments. They feel that based on your traits and your appeal to the minority groups, getting to where you are now is already a miracle. I've also seen some of your fellow peers say this about you. They all acknowledge your talents, but at the same time, they also feel that your success has more to do with your luck than your talents. Regarding this, what do you have to say?"

It was true that there were many of such voices on the internet right now.

Just randomly browsing the forums or Weibo, many of these channels were discussing Zhang Ye's promotion into the B-list rankings. This was considered quite a feat in the entertainment circle as well.

"What a miracle!"

"Zhang Ye's too lucky. If he even had a little bit of bad luck, he couldn't possibly have reached where he is right now!"

"Zhang Ye's just a very normal looking guy. How did he even become a celebrity? And he even managed to become a B-list celebrity? I could do it too then! At least, I am a teeny bit better looking than Zhang Ye!"

"There's a definite element of luck in Zhang Ye's success."

“If I had Zhang Ye’s luck and talent too, how great would it be!”

“Zhang Ye is still a newcomer, without many film credits to his name and has never sang before either. Just based on a few television programs on the local channels and an online television station, with some poems and speeches, Zhang Ye has somehow amassed so much popularity. This would surely make many of the ‘old-timers’ in the entertainment industry quite uncomfortable! If he could become a B-list celebrity this way, then if Zhang Ye were to ever officially go into movies or singing, or do a few programs on a satellite channel with nationwide coverage, then wouldn’t his popularity defy all common sense by then?”

“Not defy all common sense, more like his popularity would be out of this world at that time!”

“This person has opened up an alternative route to advancing in the entertainment circle!”

“Other celebrities all depend on themselves and work hard for many years in the industry with no assurance of anything, but Zhang Ye’s achievements when he has only just debuted for about a year, when compared to them, really does feel a little unfair.”

“Yes, a lot of his fellow peers are not too happy with him.”

“That’s right. Mathematical and literary standards do not belong in the entertainment circle at all. If he had advanced with the aid of those, then it really leaves those celebrities in the entertainment industry rather helpless.”

There were many comments such as those mentioned.

When a person gets popular, gossip will fly. It was a very normal phenomenon.

Faced with such a question from the reporters, Zhang Ye also fell silent for a moment.

Xiaoxue raised her audio recorder up and asked, “Teacher Zhang, how do you feel about the comments made by these minority groups and your fellow peers from the entertainment industry?”

Unfair?

Got lucky?

Going by an alternative entertainment route that was considered as unorthodox?

Seeing all of the reporters not blinking as they awaited for his answer, Zhang Ye smiled for a moment, not feeling angry at all because of these question. He even eloquently said, “I’ve said this before: whoever it is or whatever kind of art form we’re talking about, there is no possibility of it being liked or accepted by everyone. There are those who like me and those who dislike me. Whatever the people’s comments about me are, I will accept them, but for some of my fellow peers’ comments...” He paused for a moment, before suddenly getting into the mood and saying, “I

have here for them, a poem—a short poem.”

When everyone heard that, they felt like they were all suddenly injected with adrenaline. They became extremely excited!

“What poem?”

“Teacher Zhang, please recite it!”

“Ah, wait, wait, wait, please wait a while! My pen recorder broke! Let me quickly get another!”

“Would the person in front please squat down a little! I can’t get a picture! Please, people in the middle, please squat a little!”

As long as it was anyone who knew a little of Zhang Ye’s history, they would know that Zhang Ye’s most outstanding talent was not mathematics, nor was it crosstalk, or his hosting abilities. It was actually his poetry composition!

Zhang Ye softly recited:

“A Successful Flower.

“We always admire only the beauty of flowers!

“but its budding in its beginnings

“were watered by tears of its struggles,

“and rained on by the blood of its sacrifices!”

The poem ended here.

Tears?

Blood?

Sacrifices?

At this moment, an old neighbor of Zhang Ye's family who was standing around the crowd spoke. When she saw the reporters here earlier, she stood where she was and listened, but finally unable to keep quiet about it any longer, she opened her mouth. “Little Ye, don't be bothered by those sarcastic remarks from your fellow peers! We neighbors have watched you grow up and know how many sacrifices you've made. You'd skip sleep every day just to finish recording your programs. For your job, you've always risked your life just to get things done, but who has seen that side of you?”

Zhang Ye clasped his hands, then smiled and said, “Grandma Cui, thank you.”

Another old man said, “Little Ye, work hard. We're always

supportive of you.”

A woman said, “Yes, don’t listen to their nonsense!”

The poem was very short and was only composed of four phrases, but the impact of this poem was strong enough to cause the hearts of those reporters to sink a little. Yes, everyone could only see Zhang Ye’s success, but when it came to his hard work and sacrifices, how many had bothered to notice it? How many people even knew about it?

Xiaoxue glanced at Zhang Ye a few times. This was just her first time interviewing Zhang Ye, but when she came face to face with him now, she suddenly felt that she had some understanding of this person!

Back then, during the hijacking incident, everyone had happily talked about how Zhang Ye was so lucky to have brought the plane down by landing it safely, but did anyone think about how Zhang Ye had nearly died in a plane crash? Everyone saw Zhang Ye silencing all his detractors during the crosstalk competition, but did anyone ever care about how Zhang Ye had nearly been banned for life by the SARFT!? Luck? Fluke? Coincidental? Zhang Ye did not reach where he was now based on these factors! He had fought his way through a bloody path against overwhelming odds!

Leaders suppressing him!

Fellow peers attacking him!

In the moment between life and death!

A choice between compromising or standing his ground!

No matter when and where, Zhang Ye dared to stand up proudly to claim this: My road has not been easy or smooth. The path he chose was harder than anyone else's!

A Successful Flower.

—This was a very well-known work by famous prose author, Bingxin. Bingxin was famous for her prose works, but this short poem was one of her rarer and more outstanding works. Faced with the questions by these reporters and doubts from his fellow peers, Zhang Ye felt that this poem was the best reply as it represented his current thoughts and emotions. Back in his previous world, he also liked this poem very much, probably because of the use of the word “sacrifices” in it. Whenever he recited this short poem, Zhang Ye's expression was not one of lament or complaint, and he did not say it to tell others that he did not have it easy. Instead, he mentioned it with a smile and some pride, because the “sacrifices” in this short poem were not pain or torture to him, but symbolized his strength of character instead. It was the source of his pride to be able to puff out his chest and raise his head high when faced with anything, because that was not a sacrifice to life's unfairness, but the value and sacrifices of his uncompromising character!

On the same day.

This poem had been published by many publications throughout the country!

“Success and Sacrifice!”

“Zhang Ye’s Voice!”

“A Successful Flower!”

“Zhang Ye: A blooming flower stained with blood! ”

When this poem was published, it immediately caused an ardent discussion on the internet.

“Teacher Zhang, you’re the best!”

“Don’t bother with what others say, we understand you! How much you have sacrificed, we all know!”

“F**k, What’s wrong with ‘unorthodox, alternative paths’? So what if he went by the unconventional path? That’s what we favor, the unconventional path! Because of this, let us continue harassing them! If one comes at us, we will deal with that one! If a bunch of them comes at us, we will deal with all of them!”

“Supporting Zhang Ye!”

“Teacher Zhang’s totally deserving of his B-list ranking!”

“Those who don’t know anything, I suggest you check out Teacher Zhang’s CV first before opening your mouth!”

A Successful Flower might not carry the blood boiling passion like Zhang Ye’s previous works, nor was it as excellent as them, but it did carry a very important and heavy emotion. Anyone who read it would feel their hearts sink a little, especially that phrase “were watered by tears of its struggles, / and rained on by the blood of its sacrifices.” Those words had silenced many of Zhang Ye’s detractors as well as those who were jealous of his achievements. Thinking of how Zhang Ye had made it so far, they did not dare to say any more.

Difficult?

There was a C-list celebrity movie star who once suffered a fracture during filming. After that, when he posted on Weibo, crying and whining for over a month, his fans all sympathetically claimed that he had suffered so much!

When a Korean singer had a few pimples growing on his face, the fans were all crying and shouting, saying things like how life was so unfair, claiming how that Korean celebrity had always suffered so many mishaps!

Was that difficult?

Compared to Zhang Ye, their difficulties might not even be considered as something!

Having been held in jail twice, forced to resign by Beijing Radio Station, sacked by Beijing Television Station, suspended by Peking University, nearly losing his life in an airplane hijacking incident, being suppressed multiple times by the Shanghai SARFT, being affected by the most stringent ban in the history of the SARFT, and now being unemployed even though he was already a B-list celebrity with nothing to do except stay at home, being bored until he could even “leisurely” go out in the morning for a jog. There was only one such person who existed in the whole of the entertainment industry. So who dared to say that they were suffering more than Zhang Ye?

No one would dare to say that!

No one had it more difficult than him!

Even so, even then, Zhang Ye had gone against all odds and managed to stand at his position in the B-list rankings. What kind of a notion was that!

In this whole wide world.

Who else could compare!?

Chapter 616 – Chenchen's Guardian Called To School For A Meeting!

In the afternoon.

Zhang Ye leisurely went downstairs for a bowl of meat stew at a food stall nearby. It was rare for him to be so free these days, so he wanted to enjoy his life for now.

“Master.”

“Hey, Teacher Zhang, you are here!”

“I'll have a bowl.”

“Large or small?”

“A large bowl, add more garlic sauce.”

“OK, please wait for a moment.”

The reporters had already left and there were none of them in the district anymore. Zhang Ye had a unique way of handling reporters. Many of the other famous celebrities were always troubled by the ever-present reporters and would think that there were always some nearby at every moment, so they tended to be extra cautious wherever they went. They would hide from reporters when they were going home, when they were eating, and

when they went out to meet friends, causing even more reporters to want to follow them. Zhang Ye was obviously doing the opposite. He would not hide from reporters as he would accept interviews at any time. Even if he was not free, he would still have the courtesy to answer one or two questions. He would not refuse anyone, answering any questions that were asked, without hiding or acting mysterious. When the interview was done, the reporters would leave since there was nothing more for them to do. And so, they would not follow him around every day.

As he was eating, his phone rang.

When he saw the number—what a surprise!—it was Rao Aimin who was calling him.

Zhang Ye swallowed his food and said with a mumble: “Hello, Landlady Auntie. What’s the matter? I’m eating now.”

She replied: “Are you busy these next few days?”

“These next few days?” Hearing this, Zhang Ye was immediately put on high alert and said: “I’m busy, really busy!”

Rao Aimin smirked: “What are you busy with? Aren’t you mostly staying at home nowadays since you’re without any work? From the B-list celebrities and upwards, there’s no one who is as free as you are!”

Zhang Ye said: “...Then why do you ask when you already know

it.”

“That’s why I’m entrusting you with something. I have to go on a long trip for some personal matters for a while and I must leave in a moment. But Chencheng definitely cannot be left at home by herself and I don’t feel at ease letting other people watch over her. Anyway, since you’re free at home, you will have to help me take care of her,” Rao Aimin said.

“For how many days?” Zhang Ye asked.

She replied: “It depends. Maybe it will take a few days, maybe it’ll be a month.”

Zhang Ye exclaimed: “Even up to a month? Are you going up to the moon or what!?”

She said: “It’ll be a month at most but I might come back after a few days. I’ll not let you help for nothing. Since you haven’t paid your rent for this month yet, I’ve decided that you do not need to pay the rent for this month.”

Zhang Ye was not willing to do it and lamented: “How much would it cost to hire a nanny? Don’t even think about it, absolutely not! I’m still looking for a job and I’ll be busy if there is a new job offer. How can I find the time to take care of a child? That’s that then. I’m going to eat now, so please ask someone else, Landlady Auntie!”

In the next second, Rao Aimin said: “You do not need to pay rent for the next three months!”

Without even thinking, Zhang Ye replied: “...Alright then, leave her to me!”

She acknowledged and said: “Be more meticulous and remember to fetch the child to and from school every day.”

Zhang Ye said: “I know that, it’s not like I’ve never taken care of her before.”

Rao Aimin instructed him for a long time before hanging up. Although the landlady had a bad temper and a wicked mouth, she was still very meticulous when it came to Chenchen and took great care of her.

Hai, not only did he still not find any hosting jobs, he was now even tasked with a big errand.

After hanging up, Zhang Ye continued eating his meat stew, but just as he took a mouthful of the meat, another call came in. He did not recognize this number.

Zhang Ye picked it up and said: “Hello, who’s this?”

It was a young woman’s voice: “Teacher Zhang, I’m Zhao Mei, Rao Chenchen’s form teacher from No. 2 Experimental Primary School. We met at last year’s parents’ public class, do you still

remember me?”

Zhang Ye had an impression of her. It was during the time when he was not famous yet, and he had went in place of Rao Aimin to participate in Chenchen’s lesson and even helped Chenchen to write “Tribute to the White Poplar” for her essay. He said, “Teacher Zhao, of course I remember you. What are you calling me for?”

Zhao Mei said: “Didn’t you give me your contact number previously in case there was anything to inform you regarding Chenchen? I just tried giving her guardian, Miss Rao, a call, but couldn’t get through, so I contacted you instead.”

It was true that she couldn’t get through to the Landlady Auntie earlier.

She had just called me a short while ago.

Zhang Ye asked immediately: “What’s the matter? Please speak.”

“Chenchen got into trouble again. Can you make a trip to the school?” Zhao Mei said helplessly.

Zhang Ye was a little stunned, so he asked: “Is it serious? Did Chenchen get bullied again?”

Zhao Mei laughed ironically and replied: “That’s not the case. It would be fortunate if Chenchen did not bully others instead, so

how would she be bullied? It's better for you to make a trip here as it's not convenient to talk over the phone."

That kid! Always getting into trouble!

"OK, OK, OK, I'll be there immediately." Zhang Ye tucked away his phone and hurriedly finished his food. After settling the bill, he returned to the district and drove directly to No. 2 Experimental Primary School. He did not contact Rao Aimin as she had other urgent matters to settle, so even if he told her, she couldn't go anyway. It was better that he just went by himself.

Zhang Ye was very concerned because it was about Chenchen, so he drove very fast.

In the afternoon.

A little past 1 PM.

Zhang Ye drove up to the school entrance. As the school was still having afternoon lessons, he informed the security guard in the guardroom, "I'm the guardian of a student here. Teacher Zhao Mei of the second grade asked me to come." Then he was let in and he went to park his car before proceeding upstairs to the teachers' office quickly.

At the teaching block.

In the experimental classroom of second grade, class one.

The mathematics teacher, Li Jiaying, was a young teacher in his mid-twenties. He was standing at the rostrum, staring angrily at Chenchen who was standing at her desk. The surrounding students were all seated while only Chenchen was standing up. A lunch box given by the school was on her desk but it had already turned cold. The chopsticks were still wrapped in a plastic wrap and it was obvious that Chenchen had not eaten her meal yet. The atmosphere in the classroom was very tense as Zhao Mei and some of the other subjects' teachers stood at the side.

Zhao Mei persuaded, "Teacher Li, let's carry on with the lesson first."

The language teacher also said, "Yes, don't bear grudges on a child."

Li Jiaying insisted firmly, "Teacher Zhao, it's not that I don't want to go on with the lesson, but this Rao Chenchen has really gone too far. She's not showing me any respect at all and this is not even the first time it has happened."

Zhao Mei said, "I've already informed Chenchen's guardian to come down to the school, we can discuss it later after the lesson if there's anything."

Li Jiaying said angrily, "Then let's wait for her guardian to get here! We need to resolve this matter before anything else! Today, I

have to demonstrate clearly. If Rao Chenchen does not apologize to me, I won't continue with this lesson!"

Zhao Mei said, "Then let the child eat her food first."

"I didn't say she couldn't eat her food, but she must be punished by standing in the class!" Li Jiaying gritted his teeth.

The form teacher, Zhao Mei walked in front of Chenchen and said, "Eat your food first."

Chenchen said with a straight face, "I'm not eating. It has turned cold."

Zhao Mei said, "You should just apologize to Teacher Li. It was definitely wrong of you to rebuke Teacher Li earlier at lunchtime."

Chenchen stubbornly said, "I won't apologize!"

Li Jiaying said angrily, "Look at her! Just look at her!"

The female fine arts teacher also tried to calm things down and said, "Teacher Li, calm down."

"I've always wondered!" Li Jiaying flared up and then said, "How can a child with such low standards be in the experimental class! I suggest that you all transfer her out immediately! Otherwise, I won't ever be able to teach this subject anymore!"

Many of the other students were also persuading Chenchen in whispering voices.

“Chenchen.”

“Why don’t you apologize?”

“You should just say sorry to Teacher Li.”

Chenchen looked at her classmates and then said, “I’m not in the wrong, why should I apologize? He doesn’t know how to teach mathematics! I don’t understand any of what he’s teaching at all!”

Li Jiaying furiously said, “It’s a problem of your standard if you don’t understand it. You are bad at learning, not serious, not hardworking, and have a lack of motivation! I don’t know how to teach? I was an intern and taught in Heping High School before. Last year, I was transferred to No. 2 Experimental Primary School. If I can teach high school students, why couldn’t I teach primary school students?”

Chenchen pouted, “—Hur hur!”

When he heard that, Li Jiaying nearly died of anger. He said, “Laugh again if you dare!”

All of a sudden, a figure walked in through the door and shouted

in the same tone, “Shout again if you dare!”

This loud voice made everyone in the classroom jump in fright!

The person who had entered the classroom was Zhang Ye of course. He was wearing sunglasses as he came into the classroom!

Chenchen immediately raised up her head.

Li Jiaying was exasperated. He asked, “What are you doing?”

“I’m Chenchen’s guardian!” Zhang Ye looked unpleasantly at the math teacher. When he was walking to the classroom, in the corridor, he could roughly hear what was being said and knew about the situation. He said, “My child may have her own problems but there are many ways to solve a problem. There’s no need for physical punishment and senseless yelling at her! Who are you trying to scare? What are you shouting for? If you want to shout, shout at me! Why are you yelling at a child!”

Li Jiaying was wondering what kind of guardian he was and immediately said, “First, I did not punish her physically; second, I allowed her to eat her food. It’s just that she does not want to eat. Finally, what is her purpose in coming to school? What’s her role and responsibility? Not only did she disobey the teacher, she even openly insulted the teacher’s teaching standard! However, I would like to ask you this. As Chenchen’s guardian, do you know if your child is still motivated to learn?”

The commotion that occurred here had attracted many teachers who were having their free period. But the only person who knew him as Zhang Ye was the form teacher, Zhao Mei. Although Zhang Ye came last year, since he was still an unknown back then, not many people knew about him. Since the majority of second grade students did not chase after stars, why would the matter at that time be spread around? At most, some teachers would occasionally relate to the incident and bring it up in their conversations.

After listening to Li Jiaying's words, Zhang Ye did not argue with him. With his eloquent mouth, even a hundred math teachers would not be able to out-argue him. But he knew that he had to first understand the situation before saying anything else.

Walking over, Zhang Ye asked with a deadpan expression, "What's going on?"

Chenchen said nothing.

Zhang Ye said, "Spit it out."

He knew Chenchen was not an ordinary child. She was extremely naughty and antisocial. Sometimes, even he would be vexed to death by her, let alone other people. However, Zhang Ye also knew that Chenchen was not an idiot. On the contrary, she was smarter than most of her peers, except that she was also lazy and did not like to learn. That was why when he heard the commotion from outside the classroom that Chenchen claimed that Li Jiaying did not know how to teach and she could not understand his teaching, Zhang Ye felt puzzled. With Chenchen's intelligence, how could she not understand elementary math problems? So he wanted to

understand the situation further, so as not to blindly side with the child.

Chenchen leered at him, looked down at her desk and picked up a textbook from the table and passed it to Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye took a look and saw what were obviously Li Jiaying's class notes written during lunchtime. This math problem was rather simple for adults since they would not even need to calculate it to get the answer. But the steps to solving the problem and the train of thought....

Chenchen could not understand it?

Zhang Ye roughly understood what was going on.

Chapter 617 – Wondrous Math Problem From The Previous World!

In the classroom.

Zhang Ye put down Chenchen's workbook and patted on her shoulder before asking her, "How long have you been standing for? Sit down first, I know what is going on."

Chenchen nodded, then sat down and rubbed her legs vigorously.

Li Jiaxing who did not agree to this, said, "Sir, this is a school and I'm the teacher currently teaching this lesson. At school, students should listen to teachers, and since she did not apologize yet, I'm not going to let her to sit down!"

Zhang Ye retorted, "What if I feel that she does not need to apologize?"

Li Jiaxing stared at him and never thought that a student's guardian would speak to him in such a manner. This place was Beijing's No. 2 Experimental Primary School and one should know just what kind of a school it was to be named as such. It was one of the key focus primary schools in the city with lots of people and parents vying hard to send their children here. Which parent did not treat the teachers here with courtesy and politeness when they saw them? Even if it hadn't been a key focus primary school, in any normal school, the students' parents would never talk to a teacher in this way. Li Jiaxing shouted, "Then take your child back home! If you have the capability and ability, you can teach her

yourself! There's no need for her to come to school!"

Chenchen unexpectedly replied, "My uncle can teach better than you."

"You!" Li Jiaying was getting mad!

What a terrible child!

And what a terrible guardian!

This was exactly a case of what type of a general would lead what kind of a soldier! How the child turned out depended on what kind of a guardian you were! I was still wondering why this child was so unbearing! It's simply because the guardian was also the same!

The surrounding teachers were also speaking in whispers.

"What sort of a guardian is that?"

"He's too protective of the child."

"Right, this child has been spoiled by him."

"Why do I feel that Chenchen's guardian looks a little familiar to me?"

“I don’t know, I don’t recognize him at all. I’ve never seen him at the past parent-teacher meeting sessions either. I only remember a woman who goes by the surname, Rao, the one who is very pretty but spoke in an expressionless manner.”

“Oh, I remember her.”

“Ai, the parents these days really have a problem educating their children!”

“She even thinks that her uncle can teach better than Teacher Li? Hur hur, Teacher Li is our highest qualified mathematics teacher in No. 2 Experimental Primary School. If he hadn’t offended someone at the high school he was teaching in, he would not have been dismissed and ended up teaching at a primary school.”

Many of the teachers from the other grades also came to take a look at the commotion happening between guardian and teacher, pointing at them as they observed and talked.

It was probably only the form teacher, Zhao Mei, who knew the meaning of Chenchen’s previous sentence. She has paid attention to the news of Zhang Ye before and knew about her uncle’s background rather well. When Zhao Mei saw that the situation was getting a little out of control, and afraid that it would alarm the school leaders or media, leading to a bigger mess, she immediately tried to smooth over the situation by saying to Zhang Ye, “Teacher Zhang, this matter is actually...”

Li Jiaxing interrupted and asked, “Teacher Zhang? What a

coincidence, you're also a teacher?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "You could say so."

Li Jiaxing stared at him and asked, "What subject do you teach?"

What subject did I teach? Zhang Ye replied, "In the past, I could be considered as having taught mathematics."

Once those words were said, a lot of the surrounding teachers of No. 2 Experimental Primary School were stunned. This was a [conflict between people who were both on the same side](#)? That's coincidental? You're also a math teacher?

The flood dashes against the Temple of the Dragon King; a two-part allegorical saying, of which the first part, always stated, is descriptive, while the second part, sometimes unstated, carries the message.

Upon hearing that, Li Jiaxing got even angrier and said, "Since we are in the same field and teach mathematics, then as a teacher, you should understand better that a student should unconditionally listen and carry out a teacher's teachings. We won't harm the students since we are carrying out the work of teaching others. If you are also a teacher, you should be guiding the child on how to have the correct learning attitude and not spoiling the child like this!" He paused for a while and asked, "Which school do you teach at? What grade do you teach? Primary school? Junior high?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Let's not talk about which school I

taught at first. Just now, I found what you said not to my liking, and it was the word ‘unconditionally.’ Perhaps we have a different understandings, but to me, other than family love, there is nothing in the world that is unconditional. If my child is in the wrong, I will criticize her. For example, like today, Chenchen’s attitude towards her teacher is indeed problematic. I will go back and teach her about it. But at the same time, the reason I don’t think that my child should apologize is because I feel that you have the same problem. If a teacher makes a mistake, should the students unconditionally follow and do what they’re told? I don’t think so, because not even a teacher has such privilege!”

Huh?

What did he say?

Li Jiaying said, “I’m in the wrong? Where did I do wrong? During lunchtime, I was talking about yesterday’s homework when I pointed to Chenchen to answer a question. After that, I explained about the question in detail, but I was wrong?”

The other teachers were all speechless looking at Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye pointed to Chenchen’s textbook and said, “I’ve seen this math problem and its solving process. It’s not wrong; the steps and the answers are correct too.”

“Then you...” Before Li Jiaying could finish, he was already rebuked by Zhang Ye’s next words.

Zhang Ye said, “But when I meant that it was correct, that is in the case of the question being targeted at adults. Actually, I can ask all of the students right now.” He turned around and faced the class. Waving the textbook in his hand, he asked, “Earlier during lunchtime, did you all really understand Teacher Li’s calculation and the train of thought in solving this math problem?”

Actually, Li Jiaying had also written the solution on the whiteboard.

Listening to Chenchen’s guardian talking as though he knew what he was saying, all the teachers, including Zhao Mei, looked at the whiteboard, but were unable to see anything wrong with it.

“What’s the problem?”

“Is there a problem in this question?”

“The final answer is nine, so it’s correct.”

“This problem does not even need to be calculated.”

“Just separate them out, then the problem will be solved?”

All of the teachers were confused.

At this moment, a girl who was not on friendly terms with Chenchen raised her hand and said, “I understand it! Teacher Li

explained it very well! I can understand all of it!”

Zhang Ye pointed to the whiteboard and asked, “Then can you explain how to do the separation for this step?”

The girl was a little stunned and blinked for a long time but did not say anything.

After that, a little boy said, “I...I also don’t understand.”

Then, more students gradually said the same.

“Me too.”

“I don’t understand it as well.”

“I managed to get the final answer but I don’t know why I must separate the numbers that way.”

“Yes, me too.”

Li Jiaying was a little shocked by this. He said, “Didn’t you all say that you understood when I finished explaining the question just now! Why is it now that all of you suddenly don’t understand it? Yes, this question is quite difficult for a second grade student, but I’ve already explained the steps required to solve this and written out the solution very clearly, so what do you all not understand about it?”

A little boy lowered his head and explained his reason, “Earlier, when I saw all the other classmates saying they understood it, I also nodded along with them, but actually, I did not understand it.”

Zhang Ye said, “See, the other children also did not understand, but only Chenchen spoke the truth.”

Li Jiaying helplessly said, “It’s fine if you don’t understand it, I can explain it again to everyone. This time, I hope everyone will be more serious and attentive!”

Zhang Ye interrupted, “But have you thought about it before, Teacher Li? It might not be that the children were not attentive, but that your solving process and train of thought to the question was problematic instead?”

Li Jiaying laughed in extreme anger and said, “There’s a problem with my explanation?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yes.”

Li Jiaying said, “Then why don’t you tell me, where did I teach incorrectly?”

Suddenly, news of the commotion made its way to the school leaders and several leaders of the No. 2 Experimental Primary School had arrived at the classroom entrance, bringing two

security guards along with them.

The vice-principal entered and asked, “What happened? Whose parent is causing trouble here?”

Zhao Mei hurriedly went up and explained, “It’s just a misunderstanding, there’s no trouble at all.” Then, she explained about Zhang Ye and Li Jiaying’s reason for their disagreement.

The school leaders were left speechless for a while when they heard that. They were wondering from where in the countryside this guardian had come from. He tried to argue about a math problem with a mathematics teacher? They also saw the question on the whiteboard and wondered: what could be the problem with it since it was such a simple question? He was also a teacher? He’s even a mathematics teacher? Then his standard must really be a joke. Even the two security guards, who did not seem well-educated, after looking at the question, also looked at Chenchen’s guardian despisingly.

And then Zhang Ye spoke in an indifferent tone, “Teacher Li, I don’t doubt your mathematics standard, I only said that your train of thought in teaching might have some problems. You were a teacher at a high school previously?”

Li Jiaying said, “Correct.”

The vice-principal frowned and added, “Teacher Li also holds a master’s and is a scholar from Tianjin Normal University, yet you are saying that Teacher Li’s standard is not good enough?”

“A master’s? Majored in higher mathematics? Indeed, he is very good.” Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Let me put it this way, everyone might not understand if I just say it like this. Since I’m also a math teacher, then let me pose a problem now for everyone to try to solve, then there might be an answer to the problems I brought up, OK?”

Zhao Mei said, “This...”

One of the school leaders decided to speak up first, thinking that this student’s guardian was trying to challenge the authority of their teachers and creating trouble. That wouldn’t do, so this matter had to be solved today no matter what. He said, “Sure, since the subject for this class now is still math anyway.”

Li Jiaying could only think, You still want to set a question for me, even though I have a master’s? He didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Then, he said, “Fine, pose the problem. Is it calculus? Functions? Or equations?”

Zhang Ye waved his hand with a smile and said, “No, it’s just a simple elementary math question.”

When they heard this, the teachers went into an uproar.

“What?”

“Elementary math question?”

“Are you teasing Teacher Li?”

“Why do you even need to give an elementary math question? Even a fool could do it!”

“Teacher Li has a master’s from a well-known school!”

Zhang Ye walked towards the whiteboard and said, “I heard the teachers’ saying that even a fool could do it? Hur hur, that might not be so. Anyway, I’m going to pose the problem now.”

Zhang Ye found a black marker and began to write out the problem on the whiteboard.

This problem of course did not exist in this world, because this world’s current education and syllabus had differed slightly with Zhang Ye’s previous world. In Zhang Ye’s previous world, this set of problems was very famous, and had for a time, caused a commotion and heated discussions all over the internet. Essentially, this was really an elementary math question and had appeared in a elementary math topic before. But any adults who had seen it before would give it the nickname:

—The wondrous math problem!

Today, Zhang Ye would display it here as he wanted to make the people from this world widen their horizons!

Chapter 618 – Philosophy Behind The Math Problem!

On the whiteboard.

Zhang Ye's wondrous math problem from his previous world had surfaced in this world!!

The problems were: Follow the rhythm and write out the multiplication formula (a set of onomatopoeic words):

1: Ding Ding Ding, Ding Ding Ding;

2: Ah, Ah, Ah, Ah;

3: Wu Wu Wu, Wu Wu Wu;

4: Miao Miao, Miao Miao, Miao Miao.

There were a total of four questions with few words. Zhang Ye finished writing them with just a few strokes before putting down the marker. He turned around and said, "I have finished setting the questions, everyone can give them a try. The students may try it as well, so just find a blank piece paper to write down your answers. Yes, let me emphasize it once more, this is a set of elementary math questions meant for primary school students. OK, you may begin now."

If the people from Zhang Ye's previous world saw these math problems, they would not be unfamiliar with them or too surprised. However, in this world, these teachers had never seen such kind of questions before, so they were all f**king stunned by it!!

Pfft!

F**k!

What kind of math questions were these!

Li Jiaying had already intended to pick up a marker to start writing. If he could even handle university-level higher math questions, what would be so difficult about these elementary math questions. After all, he held a master's degree! But within a second of seeing the questions, Li Jiaying felt like he was suddenly overwhelmed by a hundred thousand lines of 'f**k you'!

This...

What the f**k was this!

A second grade fine arts teacher asked in confusion, "Are these really elementary math questions? That's impossible! They are such difficult questions that I don't even understand them!"

A third grade music teacher said, "Yes, I don't even know what the meaning of these questions are."

Zhao Mei was also trying to solve the questions but was left very confused, “Onomatopoeic words? What do you mean by onomatopoeic words?”

The vice-principal also muttered softly to himself, “Follow the rhythm to write out the multiplication formula? Rhythm? What kind of rhythm? Why are the questions even related to music now? Do-Re-Mi-Fa-So-La-Ti-Do? How would the children even understand it!”

One of the language teachers mumbled to himself, “Ding Ding Ding? Is this a multiplication formula?”

An English teacher who had already given up said, “It’s impossible to solve this! What and what?!”

Li Jiaying was also experiencing a headache that was hurting his brain at this moment. What did these sounds have anything to do with multiplication formulas? And also, how would these multiplication formulas be written?

However, Chenchen had already lowered her head and started to write.

Her other classmates were also writing down their own answers.

One minute passed.

Three minutes passed.

Five minutes passed.

Suddenly, Zhang Ye told everyone to stop. “OK, that’s enough. The time given is already too long. Those who know the answers would have already written them. Teacher Li?”

Li Jiaying handed over his answers with a dark expression. He had written down the answers on the blank area on the back side of his teaching materials. The answers were written as—Question one: “ 1×3 , 1×3 .”; Question two: Empty, he did not write any answer for it; Question three: “ 1×3 , 1×3 .”; Question four: “ 1×2 , 1×2 , 1×2 .”

Zhao Mei also wrote: Ding $\times 3$, Ding $\times 3$; Ah $\times 1$, Ah $\times 1$; and so on for the other questions.

The other teachers’ answers were also all sorts of strange. Compared to Zhao Mei’s multiplication formula which even contained the Chinese characters, the answers given by the others were much odder and weirder.

Most of the teachers did not answer at all because they could not even understand the questions.

Zhao Mei asked curiously, “What are the correct answers?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Teacher Zhao, can you help me collect the answers from the students?”

“Sure.” Zhao Mei went to collect the answers from all of them.

After they were fully collected, Zhang Ye wrote down the right answers on the whiteboard.

The answer to the first question: 3×2

The answer to the second question: 1×4

The answer to the third question: 3×2

The answer to the fourth question: 2×3

Every teacher had answered them wrong!

When Li Jiaying saw the answers, he was suddenly enlightened!

He finally understood what was going on once the answers were given!

“So that’s how it is!” A fine arts teacher said in a speechless manner, “This was really too difficult to guess, just reading and understanding it was already too difficult!”

One of the teachers couldn’t resist and said, “These are elementary math questions? Which primary student can solve

these kind of questions? If they can do it, I'll eat all the answer sheets!"

Li Jiaying nodded and said, "Even if they can get it right, it's probably only by chance."

Zhang Ye asked with great interest, "Oh, is that so?"

"How is it not so?" Li Jiaying pointed to the whiteboard and said, "Even the adults had trouble understanding those questions, so don't even mention the children!"

Zhao Mei also nodded.

"That's right," all the teachers said.

Zhang Ye happily said, "Alright, since everyone says that, let's check the answers by the children. Teacher Zhao, could I trouble you to read out their answers?"

Zhao Mei had not looked at their answers yet, so she said, "Alright, but there are no names on the answer sheets."

"It's alright, no need for any names," Zhang Ye said.

Zhao Mei acknowledged and took the stack of answer sheets. From the first one, she read out, " 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3" Reading up till here, Zhao Mei and the

rest of the teachers were all stunned. Zhao Mei's hands shivered, she seemed to have witnessed something miraculous. She stared with her eyes wide open and continued reading, reading faster as she went on, “— 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 ...empty, a student did not answer.... 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 3×2 ; 1×4 ; 3×2 ; 2×3 !”

She finished reading out all of the students' answers!

Only one student handed in an unanswered sheet and another one got it wrong but everyone else was correct. In the entire class one of the second grade, more than 90% of them had correctly answered those questions!

Zhao Mei raised her head up and asked blankly, “How could this happen?”

The vice-principal was shocked and said, “This...this is not possible!”

The fine arts teacher was stunned and asked, “Almost all of them got it right?”

Zhang Ye shrugged, then pointed at the children and said, “Everyone here saw them just now, the children did not engage in any cheating. I believe everyone saw it more clearly than me, is that right? After these questions were given, they did not copy from each other and I also gave the answers only after their answer sheets had been collected. That would have eliminated all possibility of them cheating, and so the results are for all here to

judge. Teacher Li, is this what you call a lucky shot even if almost all of them had answered correctly? If one or few of them got the questions correct by chance, then how would you explain almost all of them getting it correct together at the same time?”

Li Jiaxing was at a loss for an explanation. He asked, “How—how did you do that?”

Zhang Ye waved it off and said, “It’s not how I did it. You should be asking the children how they did it instead. I have mentioned and confirmed that these are only primary school elementary math questions, so perhaps the children might have a different thinking from you all. Children, do you think these questions are difficult?” He looked at them and asked.

A girl said, “It’s not difficult!”

A little boy smiled and said, “It’s very simple.”

Another boy also smiled and said, “It’s too simple.”

This was probably the first time they felt they were actually smarter than the school’s teachers. They had gotten the math questions correct when even the teachers could not answer them. Everyone was feeling very proud and excited, scrambling to speak up and express their thoughts about how this problem was really simple for them.

Chenchen’s answer was even more exasperating.

She smirked and said, “Such childish questions.”

Childish...

The elementary math questions that were labeled as childish by a child was too difficult for a group of teachers and school leaders to handle, even baffling the teacher with a master’s degree, Li Jiaxing!

This was a scolding!

This was outright scolding!

Many of the teachers did not look too good anymore.

Li Jiaxing hurriedly asked, “Just what is going on here?”

Everyone did not know or understand why either!

Zhang Ye explained, “You might think that this is magic. Why did the adults find the questions to be so difficult while the children solved it without any pressure at all? Obviously this was not magic. It’s just the difference of the train of thought in approaching the solving of the questions. Teacher Li, you have a master’s and have taught in a high school previously, but also precisely because of that, it ended up becoming a problem when you are teaching the primary school students. They are not adults

and are even the youngest among the pre-teens, so the way they view the world is also different from what adults see. Naturally, you shouldn't use an adult's train of thought to measure them by either."

After letting Zhang Ye show off a little of his skills, the teachers were silent and only waited for him to continue explaining.

Zhang Ye walked to the whiteboard and asked, "Is this question difficult? It is not difficult at all. If I change the way the question is expressed in, maybe all of you will be enlightened." Then, he wrote and drew something at the side of the 'Ding Ding Ding, Ding Ding Ding' question. Zhang Ye changed it into a set of three watermelons on one side, and another set of three watermelons on the other side, but kept the requirement of expressing the question in a multiplication formula.

When everyone saw it, they were jolted awake!

"Aiyah!

"If it was written earlier in that way, I'd have understood it!"

"Such questions already exist in the elementary math workbooks!"

"Right, it's exactly the same too!"

"Isn't it just simply a 3×2 multiplication formula!"

Li Jiaying was left speechless as he looked at Zhang Ye with a complex expression.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It looks really clear now, right? This was actually the same question, but was only changed from a pictorial representation into words. Since it was only like that, then why did everyone not understand it? Why? Let me tell all of you why. This is because the thought process of an adult is too complicated. They always overthink things, such as the meaning of the words, onomatopoeic words, or the permutation and combination of words. Thus, even when the questions were essentially the same, what was affected was actually your own judgments. However, it is different for children, as in their eyes, the world is really not that complicated at all. Together with the way we have been learning and our mindsets of how questions should be, this has led to such an outcome that seemingly feels like magic here."

The form teacher, Zhao Mei, looked at Zhang Ye in admiration. Unexpectedly, just some simple elementary math questions were conveniently modified by Zhang Ye to such a level that it not only shocked the teachers, but also gave them a lively lesson to learn from!

The math problems even had a hidden philosophy behind them!

What a legendary person of the entertainment circle! He thoroughly deserved his reputation!!

Chapter 619 – Genuflecting!

Those teachers who were present stared doubtfully and anxiously at Zhang Ye who was speaking with fervor and assurance. This was no longer just a simple lesson on elementary math problems anymore.

“Who is this person?”

“What’s his background?”

“Is he really a math teacher?”

“I’ve never before come across these types of questions that Chenchen’s guardian set, nor even heard of such questions coming from other schools or appearing in any textbooks, so could he have come up with them spontaneously?”

“This problem is really quite wonderful!”

“That’s right, there’s a hidden catch!”

“It looks difficult, but is in fact really simple.”

“Yes, it looks easy, but is in fact difficult too.”

“Why do I feel that he looks really familiar the more I look at him? I can’t see his face clearly when he’s wearing those

sunglasses!”

The teachers were discussing the experience Zhang Ye had led them through just now, leaving them with mixed feelings and a sense of reflection.

Li Jiaxing was feeling the most tangled right now as he was not only a mathematics teacher, but also the most qualified teacher among the teachers present. It was still within reason that the others, the fine arts teacher, language teacher or music teacher were not able to answer the questions, but for Li Jiaxing to be unable to answer them, he was even worse than the students he called out and criticized earlier. This made him feel very embarrassed. He would like nothing more than to run away or find a hole to hide. But he knew he could not run away; it was impossible for him to go anywhere!

After Zhang Ye had taught them a lesson, his anger also subsided. He said to Li Jiaxing, “Teacher Li, the meaning behind those questions can be applied to the problem you gave to the children as well. I have seen the steps in solving the question on the whiteboard, and the separation solution you used was in line with an adults’ thoughts and problem solving pattern, but very different from what a child has learned from kindergarten and onwards. That is why the children could not understand what you were teaching.” He picked up the marker, raised his hand, and wrote something onto the whiteboard. “What if I explained it this way? Chenchen, do you understand it now?”

Chenchen took a look and said, “I understand.”

“Ah, I understand!”

“I know how it is calculated now!”

“So that was how it was calculated!”

The other children also chimed in, expressing that it was now clear to them.

Zhang Ye revealed his own opinions and said, “And that is the reason why all of you think that the questions I posed just now were some sort of wondrous questions. That was what I meant. It’s only good for the students if the teaching style is suited to them. At least, I feel that we shouldn’t enforce the mindset of an adult onto the children. Each certain age group has its own thought process, be it primary school students, secondary school students, high school students or university students. Each of them should have a different education plan based on their thought processes. We have to move along with the times and ages of our beneficiaries.”

Everyone became speechless at this.

Philosophy was even taught through these elementary math questions?

Hidden reflections about society and education were contained in these elementary math questions?

These types of math questions were literally unheard of before by

Li Jiaying, the teachers, and school leaders, but today they were truly enlightened. At this moment, even if they were fools, they already knew that they had met an expert!

Li Jiaying breathed in deeply and asked curiously, “Which...age group of students are you teaching? Are you also a teacher teaching primary school students?” In his opinion, if someone could set these questions based on the thought process of primary school students, then it was very likely that he was also a primary school teacher by profession. That must be the reason he could understand the children so well. As for Li Jiaying, he had only been transferred to teach at a primary school in the last year, which was why he had a different line of thinking when teaching them as he was still more familiar with teaching high school students, thus making Zhang Ye look a little better than him.

The other teachers also thought the same.

However, Chenchen’s guardian gave an unexpected answer. Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Me? I used to teach university students.”

“What?”

“Huh?”

“University students?”

“You are a university teacher?”

“Surely not?”

“But you’re so young? How could you be a university teacher!”

“That’s right, how can there be such a young university math teacher?”

The teachers of No. 2 Experimental Primary School were expressing voices of doubt.

Li Jiaying as a master’s degree holder was also stunned, because he knew what it meant if one could be a math teacher at the university level. Mathematics as a subject was quite different from other subjects, as qualifications were not the only thing needed. Even though he already had master’s degree, if he wanted to teach at a university, he had to first go through an internship and have worked for some years to gain the necessary experience. Even so, he might not end up being able to teach because the requirements of a university teacher were much higher than high school or junior high!

“Which university did you teach at?” Li Jiaying knew some people in this field and was unsure whether Chenchen’s guardian was telling the truth, so he wanted to get to the bottom of things.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “I taught at Peking University previously.”

Li Jiaying was shocked, “Peking University? Which Peking University?”

Zhang Ye said, “How many Peking Universities does China have?”

When everyone heard that, they were left with their eyes wide and mouths agape. What the f**k! Peking University? The top ranked higher educational institute in the country? A globally renowned university’s math teacher?

F**k!

Could he not say something that was so ridiculous!?

How could he be a teacher at Peking University!?

A female music teacher laughed and said, “Chenchen’s guardian is really humorous, hee hee hee.”

Li Jiaying asked again, “Which school do you really teach at?”

Zhang Ye became speechless at this.

The form teacher, Zhao Mei, finally spoke up and said, “Teacher Zhang really is a teacher at Peking University. Not only is he a teacher, he’s even an associate professor in the School of Mathematical Sciences at Peking University.”

A Peking University teacher?

And even an associate professor??

The school leaders and teachers nearly fainted from shock! Could it get any more exaggerated than that? To be a teacher at Peking University in his twenties was already shocking, he's even an associate professor? How could that be possible!? The number of teachers at a university in China were just a handful, since when was there such a young associate professor??

Eh?

That's not it!

Wait a moment!

Li Jiaying suddenly remembered something, as his expression suddenly changed into one of fright. It was as though he had been greatly shocked by something. Then he said with a slight loss of his voice, "You! You are Zhang Ye!"

Those words were like a bomb that had exploded in the classroom!

The vice-principal of No. 2 Experimental Primary School stared at Chenchen's guardian and said, "You're really Zhang Ye!"

The fine arts teacher slapped her thigh and said, “Hai! No wonder I was thinking about why he looked so familiar! So it’s because he is Teacher Zhang Ye! I should have guessed it!”

“What the f**k!”

“...”

“That’s what I thought!”

One by one, the teachers started to recognize Zhang Ye!

They felt that they had really been stupid at this point of time. A guy in his twenties, wearing sunglasses in a classroom, with solid foundations in mathematics, and also an associate professor at Peking University—other than Zhang Ye, who else could it be! Right, some time ago, there were rumors going around in school that a second grade student’s guardian was a celebrity. At that time, several of the teachers had seen Zhang Ye during the public class. It was in this second grade class that the famous “Tribute to the White Poplar” originated from. But as some time had passed, people had already started to forget about this matter!

But today, Zhang Ye has appeared again!

The person most affected was of course Li Jiaying. He certainly knew who Zhang Ye was. Not only did he know him, he was also a hardcore fan of Zhang Ye. What Li Jiaying admired about Zhang

Ye was not his programs nor his poetry, but his unfathomable standard of mathematics!

Thinking back, when he found out that the long unsolvable Dale's conjecture was solved by a Chinese mathematician, Li Jiaying's excitement was indescribable and lasted for a long time too. On that day itself, he had posted many messages onto Weibo, highlighting his pride as a fellow Chinese mathematician. At that time, it was the first time he had come to know of Zhang Ye's legendary name. From then on, he had regarded Zhang Ye as his idol. In Li Jiaying's view, Zhang Ye was a new wave of leaders, and also an important pillar in the Chinese mathematics world. Just he alone could hold up and support the entire Chinese mathematics world, allowing it to stand up with its chest out in the global field of mathematics. The scene and excitement at the time when the conjecture was solved, was perhaps only something that a true math practitioner would be able to understand. It was a feeling of having his heart pumping hard, the hot-blooded passion and excitement of a mathematician!

That was why, at this moment, Li Jiaying felt like he wanted to vomit blood for three straight days and nights!

What was I doing just now? I was arguing over some math questions with Professor Zhang? I was arguing about how math education should be conducted with a world class mathematics master?

Your sister!

Argue my ass!

This was something on a whole other level!!

Faced with a living god of the mathematics world, Li Jiaying could only stand there in a trance. If he knew earlier that this was the illustrious Zhang Ye, he would not have dared to argue over the math question with him, even if it killed him. Not only him, even his mentor in mathematics would not have the right to hold an exchange about math or science with a great mathematician like Zhang Ye. Their level of difference was too great, so there was really nothing they could exchange. At the most, his mentor would be there to “listen”!

This was really Zhang Ye!

This was really the legendary Zhang Ye!

Li Jiaying was genuflecting, he was thoroughly and sincerely genuflecting!!

Chapter 620 – Witnessing A Celebrity's Appearance!

Ding ding dang lang.

The bells went off and signaled the end of the math class.

But in the classroom of second grade, class one, there were no signs that the class had already ended. Everyone was still talking with excitement. After the period was over, students and teachers of the adjacent classrooms also came over after hearing news of the commotion. Many people came to take a look at the celebrity and wanted to see for themselves just how Zhang Ye looked like in real life.

“Look, it’s Zhang Ye!”

“I know him, I know him!”

“Aiyo, it’s really him! My little brother likes him very much!”

“Why did he come to our school? I can finally see him in person!”

“I think he came here last year too. There was hearsay that he’s a relative of one of our students in the second grade.”

“He looks just the same as he does on television.”

“Everyone says that Zhang Ye only has average looks, but why do I think that he’s not bad at all?”

Teachers were human too, especially those female teachers, who were very gossipy as well.

At this moment, Li Jiaying went up to the rostrum and said excitedly to the students, “Students! Students! All of you might not quite understand, but let me introduce him to everyone. This teacher is Zhang Ye.” He gestured politely towards the direction where Zhang Ye was and continued, “Some of you or your parents might have seen him on the news, and some of you might not understand what is going on, but I’m going to tell all of you about it now. Some time ago, Teacher Zhang Ye was the person who solved the mathematical conjecture that had troubled the mathematics world for several decades. He brought us glory, dignity and honor, and is our country’s most outstanding young mathematician! He’s also one of the top mathematicians in the global mathematics field!”

With every claim made by the teacher, the children felt impressed over and over again.

“Ah?”

“Is that true?”

“He’s that great?”

“Chenchen, your guardian is so cool!”

The students clapped wildly.

Chenchen calmly said, “Yes, he’s passable.”

But Zhang Ye waved it off and said, “Teacher Li, you are too generous with your praise. I’m not that great. It’s just that everyone has exaggerated me. I’m only a simple mathematician.” He was playing it cool! It was too great of an act! Zhang Ye thought to himself about his false modesty, but maintained his tone in a “low-key” manner by sounding very humble.

“Teacher Zhang is being too modest.” Li Jiaying said, “Students, I hereby apologize to everyone. Just now during lunchtime, I did not consider the issue properly and the thought process was not tweaked well enough for you all. As a result, it caused everyone to fail to understand the logic of the solution and yet I thought that it was because you all were not being serious and attentive in class. I even lost my temper at Chenchen, therefore I would like to apologize and also thank Teacher Zhang. It was Teacher Zhang who had enlightened me. In the handling of our students’ education problem and teaching methods, there are still many things that I have to learn. On top of that, there are also many things for me to learn from Teacher Zhang! From today onwards, I’ll strictly demand more from myself and adjust my way of teaching.”

Zhang Ye waved his hand and said, “Don’t put it that way.” He

paused for a moment, then continued, “When I came in just now, I was also probably too overprotective of the child. On this matter, Chenchen has her problems as well. No matter what, she shouldn’t have challenged a teacher like this.” He turned to Chenchen and signaled for her to come over. “Come here, apologize to Teacher Li and the other teachers.”

Chenchen showed a reluctant expression.

Li Jiaying hurriedly said, “Don’t, Teacher Zhang, you’re making me look bad. I didn’t handle this matter appropriately and there were mistakes in the way I taught, so how could let the student apologize to me? Please don’t say anymore. If you say any further, I will not have any face left to continue teaching math to the students. The mistake has already been made, teachers do the same.” If it were anyone else, Li Jiaying would not have been convinced or even say such words. But standing in front of him right now was his idol in the mathematics field, a legendary expert of the mathematics world. No matter who Li Jiaying would be unconvinced by, that person would definitely not be Zhang Ye!

The matter was settled.

Everyone was now satisfied and happy with the outcome.

Under the instruction of the school leaders, most of the teachers were told to disperse and get back to their work. Some returned to their offices while some went back to their classrooms to get ready for the next lesson.

When most of the crowd had dispersed, and with the school leader not around anymore, it became easier to talk about what needed to be said.

Li Jiaxing came up to Zhang Ye immediately to ask him for guidance on some math problems. “Teacher Zhang, can I bother you for a few minutes? I just need a few minutes. I have some math problems I do not quite understand. I’ve even sought my mentor’s advice before, but he was unable to help me, so...”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Sure, how can I help?”

They were both similar in age, but Li Jiaxing was clearly older than Zhang Ye by a few years. At this moment, in front of Zhang Ye, Li Jiaxing felt just like a humble student asking about some math questions that had troubled him for a long time, patiently waiting for Zhang Ye’s explanation. Without much thought, Zhang Ye explained it to him in simple terms. Li Jiaxing could understand a bit, but still generally did not understand, mainly because his standard wasn’t good enough. So he took out a small notebook, and scribbled down some notes like a student would. After that, Li Jiaxing promptly thanked him, feeling like he was filled with wisdom and had benefited a lot from the explanation!

It was a case of meeting beats hearsay!

He was indeed a world class mathematics expert!

Li Jiaxing looked at Chenchen and felt that the more he looked at this child, the more he liked her. Those big round eyes, how clever.

Her small nose, how cute. Those eyebrows, so likable. As a result, he smiled brightly and said in a very gentle voice, “Chenchen, are you hungry? There is a microwave in the teachers’ office, let me heat up the food for you. You can’t continue without eating your meal.” He picked up the cold lunch box and said to Zhang Ye, “Chenchen is an extraordinarily clever and quick-witted child. To be honest, in my past few years of teaching, I have never come across such a smart child. In the future, she will surely have some great achievements. With your guidance, Chenchen will certainly also have the makings of a world-class mathematician!”

Chenchen: “...”

Zhang Ye: “...”

Form teacher Zhao Mei: “...”

Students of the second grade, class one: “...”

Only half an hour ago, he was pointing at Chenchen saying that she was brainless, poor at math, and did not learn seriously, but now she suddenly gained the foundations to becoming a world-class mathematician??

Li Jiaying went to heat the food up, and then returned with the boxed lunch and gave it to Chenchen. He also took the initiative to inform the teacher of the next lesson of the reason, so that Chenchen could have permission to eat her meal during class.

On seeing that there was nothing left for him to do, Zhang Ye said to the form teacher, Zhao Mei, who had invited him over in the first place, “Teacher Zhao, I’ll be leaving then.”

Zhao Mei asked, “Are you busy?”

Zhang Ye stopped in his tracks and replied, “I’m not really busy, what’s the matter?”

Zhao Mei smiled and said, “Then let’s go and talk in the teachers’ office. The reasons I asked you to come to school today was first, regarding the matter that happened in the math lesson just now, and second, I wanted to discuss with you the problem of Chenchen’s learning attitude. She’s an infamous problem student in our school and many subject teachers have always intended to have a meeting with Chenchen’s guardian to discuss about her.

Zhang Ye nervously said, “Ah?”

Zhao Mei led him towards the end of the corridor, saying, “Please come with me.”

When Zhang Ye was still schooling, he had always been afraid of having his parents called to school. This was because, when they got home, he would be surely get a beating from them. But now that he as a guardian was called to school by a teacher, he could finally understand why his parents would give him a beating. It was because it was really just too embarrassing! If the child got into trouble, he would also get a scolding. As Zhang Ye was already a big shot B-list celebrity, he was of course not looking too good at

the moment!

Ai, having acted so awesomely earlier, he was now on the verge of being exposed as incompetent!

Zhang Ye only hoped that Chenchen's teachers would give him some face and not talk down to him like how his parents were talked down to in the past!

Chapter 621 – Heated Discussions About The Wondrous Math Problem On The Internet!

At the same moment.

A math problem had suddenly caused a stir on the seemingly calm Weibo!

A Weibo verified user whose account belonged to a Beijing No. 2 Experimental Primary School teacher had posted an elementary math problem online: “Who can answer this? Everyone, come and give a try!”

At the beginning, no one really thought anything about this. On seeing the call for a challenge to solve the question, at most some people would come and take a look at it, thinking that an elementary math problem couldn't possibly be too difficult. Even secondary level math questions were not a problem for them, besides, who hadn't studied in primary school before? And so, someone began with an attempt to answer the question but just as they seriously started reading the question, they found that it was basically different from what they had expected!

“Damn! What the heck! F**k!”

“What kind of math question is this?”

“There's music?”

“Is this an elementary math question?”

“Can someone tell me what is the meaning of the question?”

“Is the first answer 1×3 ? Is it correct? F**k, I don't know.”

“Are primary school students learning how to defy logic these days? It's impossible to answer the question! Which teacher was so wicked to set such a wicked question?”

“Pfft, I've already given up!”

“Same here, my head is swelling!”

Then, the No. 2 Experimental Primary School teacher followed up with a post again: “Please note that this elementary math problem was set by our China's famous mathematician, Professor Zhang Ye, today. And to give everyone an additional blow, the math question was for our students in the second grade at No. 2 Experimental Primary School. 93.2% of the students answered correct. Only two students in the whole class got it wrong while the rest of the students got it right!”

With that, the Weibo post was attracting a lot more attention and was getting livelier than before!

“What? Zhang Ye set the question?”

“Is it really an elementary math problem?”

“Since it was Zhang Ye who set them, then it must not be simple or straightforward.”

“It was needless of you to say that. How could a world-class mathematics expert set an ordinary elementary math problem? There must surely be many layers of profundity in it. I’m getting interested now, watch me solve it!”

“The percentage of right answers by the primary school students was more than 90%? I wouldn’t believe it even if you threatened to kill me! I don’t even know the meaning of this question! Primary students can’t possibly answer it! Even if they were elite students from a key focus primary school, they couldn’t possibly be smarter than an adult?”

“Watch me do it!”

“I’ll give it a try too!”

“I’m sure it can be solved, let me think...”

“I still won’t believe it!”

Gradually, the netizens’ kept posting their answers, with each one becoming weirder than the last!

Suddenly, some celebrities also showed up, some of them being Zhang Ye's friends.

Yao Jiancai posted: "What lousy question did Little Zhang set!"

Peking University's Teacher Su Na posted: "I'm so angry! flips table! I better continue teaching my Chinese language. The mathematics world is way too scary."

Xiao Lu from Beijing Television: "Pfft, this question is really amusing, Ding Ding Ding? Ding Ding Ding? But I have to say, this is exactly what Zhang Ye's style is like!"

Finally, the No. 2 Experimental Primary School teacher appeared again and revealed the correct answers. Needless to say, a few of the netizens really could answer it correctly, but the rest of the people, numbering in the thousands, got it wrong or did not manage to answer at all. This ratio left everyone in disbelief as they all wondered if those children from No. 2 Experimental Primary School students, who were more than 90% correct, were all f**king aliens. They adults were not as good as a group of primary students??

"What's going on?"

"Isn't this absurd?"

"Was that teacher from No. 2 Experimental Primary School just spouting nonsense?"

“Are the children these days all abnormal like that?”

The netizens were all expressing their denial of this!

At this moment, Dean Pan of Peking University’s School of Mathematical Sciences, whether told by some students or had happened to chance upon this math question, also posted on Weibo—knowing that this was a trick question—and told everyone: “Hur hur, only Professor Zhang Ye can think of such devious questions. I can say for sure that this is really an elementary math problem but with a hidden catch somewhere in it. For a primary school student, it may not seem like a trap, however this is a trap that was specifically laid for an adult to fall into!”

When they saw that, everyone began to shout and clamor!

“Huh?”

“This was a trap for us?”

“Zhang Ye is really too wicked!”

“This guy has always had a character like that!”

“Pfft, I knew it! Teacher Zhang himself is already a trap! A trap of great proportions! Whoever gets involved with him will fall into it!”

“What kind of trap is it?”

“Dean Pan, can you kindly explain it?”

Dean Pan replied on Weibo: “The principle of this trap falls on the different thought process of an adult and a child. Adults easily complicate simple things, and this complication probably starts right off at the reading of the question. It is a subconscious thought process that children do not employ. Whether it is a musical note or an onomatopoeic word, it’s the same thing to them. These onomatopoeic words are basically meaningless to them, so they can easily see the essence of the question and solve it. From a certain perspective, a majority of adults might really be inferior to a primary school student at this and so would be unable to answer the question right.”

“So that’s how it is!”

“Holy shit, so that’s the reason!”

“I was still wondering!”

“Zhang Ye, this son of a bitch!”

“If he doesn’t con someone in a day, he will not feel comfortable!”

There was a wave of condemnation flung from everyone at Zhang Ye, as they laughingly scolded his wickedness!

Dean Pan posted: “It might look to be just an elementary math problem, but behind it lies some philosophies and reflections which are definitely not of the elementary level. Professor Zhang Ye is no doubt a rare genius in the mathematics world. This question is indeed very interesting. I have already copied it down and will prepare to use it for our Peking University students to try, and also to analyze it. For some problems and questions, if we change our perspectives and view it from a different angle, we may somehow get an unexpected result! Professor Little Zhang has let everyone know to never underestimate a simple-looking question at any time or any place! Because they might not be as simple as you think, but at the same time, they might also not be as complicated as you thought it to be!”

Ah?

Let the Peking University students try out the elementary math problem? And even analyze it in detail?

Dean Pan’s words were no doubt a very high appraisal of both this elementary math problem as well as Zhang Ye himself.

After seeing Dean Pan’s explanation, everyone began to understand and see the trick to this math question. Upon deeper reflection, everyone had no choice but to admire Zhang Ye’s talent, knowledge, and different way of thinking. An elementary math problem stuffed with many tricks—including philosophy, psychology, and even the importance of mathematics—with the

key point being that it could also produce such a mass face-slapping effect on others? Perhaps in the whole of China, only someone like Zhang Ye, who could make something out of nothing, could come up with a question like that!!

Chapter 622 – Ticked Off By The Elementary School Teachers!

Online, the netizens who had been left scratching their heads at that elementary math problem were all denouncing Zhang Ye in waves.

Offline, at No. 2 Experimental Primary School, in the second grade teachers' office, Zhang Ye was also surrounded by several male and female teachers, listening to their complaints.

“Chenchen's too naughty.”

“Yes, in so many years of teaching, I've never seen any child as mischievous as her.”

“Teacher Zhang, you've been too lax in the caring of your kid.”

“In all the tests that I have arranged for the class, Chenchen has never passed even once.”

“The previous time, during P.E. classes, she even fought with a boy. When we learned of it, we rushed over to check on them. Thinking that Chenchen had been bullied, we scolded the boy without a second thought but later realized that nothing had happened to Chenchen at all. Instead, she left the boy lying on the ground with just a push, giving him a gigantic bruise on his arm. When the boy's parents came to school to question the teachers and found out that it was a little girl who did it, they did not take it

up any further, possibly embarrassed by the fact that their boy had been pushed by a girl.”

“Class one is not easy to handle because Chenchen always leads some of the students to cause trouble together with her. Teacher Zhang, you have to talk to her a little when you return later!”

“Even though she is not your own daughter, as a guardian, you have have to help educate her. After all, you’re also a teacher of the people.”

The second grade teachers were full of gripes.

Zhang Ye could only constantly reassure them, “Alright, I will definitely tell her off when I get back....Yes, what you said was correct....Aiyo, you’re really tolerant....I will speak to her when we go back....Yes, yes, yes...sure, sure, sure!”

This devil of a child!

How worrisome can she get!

Only when the teachers continued with their grieving did Zhang Ye realize how much trouble Chenchen had actually caused. She was already the gang leader of No. 2 Experimental Primary School, giving the teachers all kinds of complaints!

Luckily, because the teachers knew of Zhang Ye’s status as a literary master and an internationally recognized mathematician,

they still gave him some face and did not lash out too harshly at him. Of course, there were two female teachers who were just laughingly “criticizing” Zhang Ye for his neglect in disciplining the child, but did not actually have any bias against Chenchen at all. In fact, they really liked the child who appeared like a “porcelain doll” that was more beautiful looking than any others. Besides, Chenchen did not make any trouble for them in their classes anyway, so they just playfully scolded Zhang Ye a little as it was a rare opportunity! A big shot B-lister, a well-known person in society, when put into the hands of these teachers, it would be a wasted opportunity if they did not make use of the chance to say a few words!

As they were there talking.

A soft singing voice floated in from outside.

“When will the moon be clear and bright? / With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky...” It was “Wishing We Last Forever,” but sang in a very odd way. The voice belonged to a woman, but sounded very hoarse and strained. This was not a pitch and tone that most women would be able to sing in and it made anyone who heard it feel very strange.

The singing was getting closer and closer.

A music teacher threw up her hands and said, “Raspy Luo is here.”

An art teacher gently rubbed her ears and said, “It sounds so

unpleasant.”

“This Little Luo, why does she always have to sing every day.” A teacher who was much older said, “I wouldn’t mind it if she sang well, but just listen to that.”

Zhao Mei, the form teacher of class one, laughed, “I think it’s not too bad, just that Teacher Luo’s voice isn’t that nice to listen to.”

Beside her, a female teacher nodded and said, “Teacher Luo must not have taken good care of her voice when she was going through puberty, and that must have caused her voice to sound like the manly voice she has now.”

Zhang Ye asked curiously, “Who is this Teacher Luo?”

Hearing Zhang Ye’s question, Zhao Mei said, “It’s Teacher Luo Yu, our school’s physical education teacher. Because Teacher Luo likes to sing a lot, she’s always humming a song wherever she goes. But as her voice sounds really rough, everyone gave her the nickname of ‘Raspy Luo.’”

Raspy Luo?

Physical education teacher?

Zhang Ye nodded, but his ears perked up and listened carefully to this singing voice that was getting nearer and nearer. There was no music accompaniment or rhythm, just pure singing. However, this

singing stirred up a very different kind of feeling in Zhang Ye, but he did not know how exactly he felt about this Raspy Luo's singing. In any case, it was just a very weird feeling.

Suddenly, the singing stopped.

The teachers' office door was pulled open by someone from outside and Luo Yu appeared standing at the door.

Zhang Ye looked over and saw a woman who was built quite muscularly, at a height of about 1.6 meters tall, probably weighing around 160 pounds or heavier. Her face looked pretty normal, not pretty but not ugly either. To use a description from his previous world, she would be called a "tough girl" and probably be known as a tough girl among tough girls. Anyone who saw her would be pretty in awe of her appearance.

Zhao Mei said, "Teacher Luo, your class has ended?"

Luo Yu's speaking voice also sounded very hoarse. She said, "Yes. Eh?" She noticed Zhang Ye standing there and asked, "Is this a new teacher? Or someone's parent?"

Zhang Ye introduced him, "This is Zhang Ye, Chenchen's guardian."

When Luo Yu heard that, her eyebrows immediately narrowed as she exclaimed, "So you're Chenchen's guardian!" She said to Zhang Ye, "That child of yours is really incorrigible. Every time

during P.E. class, she just tries to sit it out. When she has to do any running, she doesn't run properly; it's also the same for the aerobic exercises. She just doesn't want to learn them properly. Then there was this incident in which she even fought with someone during my class! She pushed the boy down and left him sprawled out on the ground! Her strength was really too much! In the end, I was called up to see the school leaders because of that and even got a bad scolding from them!"

Zhang Ye thought to himself, knowing that the child had been taught some basics by a certain someone. Chenchen's aunt had taught her the Eight Trigrams Palm from a young age, letting her learn the basic movements and making her do the horse stance for training. Even if her physical conditions as a child now restricted her from learning the true form of the Eight Trigrams Palm, the basics and foundations were still not something that anyone else her age would be able to match. Zhang Ye felt that even if another kid were to gang up together with that male classmate, Chenchen could still handle them, being such a brawny child!

Zhang Ye humbly said, "You're right, I will most definitely tell her off!"

Luo Yu wasn't finished. She continued telling him off, "You parents and guardians are always like this! You all spoil the child at home too much, not beating or scolding them, making these children harder and harder to teach these days. They're not obedient to the teachers at all...." She continued chirping, airing all her grievances.

The math teacher, Li Jiaying, interrupted and said, "Teacher

Luo, that's enough. It's not easy being a parent these days, the problem of children's education is a subject of national importance and would change in accordance with the changes in society. It's not something that just a few people can have influence over."

Luo Yu did not like what she heard and said, "If there's a problem with the children, then it has to be the responsibility of the parents or guardians. Why should it be blamed on society? Besides, is Rao Chenchen just your usual kind of mischievous kid? Let's not mention her relationship with the other students, just based on her attitude to the teachers, she has never known how to respect others. She always says things here and there that drives us crazy!" She turned to look at Zhang Ye again. "We've already called for her guardian to come to school many times to discuss this. It was a Big Sis last time, and this time, it's you. No matter how many times we call you over, it has not been effective in the slightest! Do you really wish to raise the child properly? Are you just going to neglect this matter like that?"

After brooding for a long time.

Luo Yu finally said all that she wanted to. She drank water from her thermal flask in large gulps before she finally settled back down at her desk, ignoring Chenchen's guardian from then on.

Zhang Ye was feeling really helpless. When had he ever been talked to like this before? First it was a group of teachers who grumbled to him non-stop, then came a P.E. teacher lecturing him for not properly caring for the child, but Zhang Ye could not and should not talk back to any of that since it was really Chenchen's fault for being disobedient and always causing trouble. Ai, what a

huge loss of face this was.

Zhao Mei quickly eased the situation by saying, “Teacher Zhang, Teacher Luo was just saying that for the good of the child, so she might have been a little harsh, but don’t take it to heart. Teacher Luo is a good person and very meticulous towards the children.”

Zhang Ye said, “I understand. So then, if there’s nothing else, I should be leaving now. I will go out for a smoke and then wait for Chenchen to finish school before picking her up. As Chenchen’s actual guardian is not around and has gone to handle some matters, I will be watching over her temporarily. If there’s anything, you can just contact me.”

“OK, let me see you out then,” Zhao Mei said.

Zhang Ye quickly said, “Don’t worry about it.”

Li Jiaxing immediately said, “Teacher Zhang, take care, take care.” He wanted to see Zhang Ye out as well, but was stopped by Zhang Ye who insisted that he not.

The other second grade teachers also waved happily to Zhang Ye to signal their farewells.

After Zhang Ye left the teachers office, Luo Yu looked at them in some confusion and asked, “What are you all up to? What Teacher Zhang? Why are you being so polite with him? You guys even wanted to see him out?”

The fine arts teacher said in a speechless manner, “You’re really a thick one. Don’t you know who that is? If you knew who he was, would you have criticized him so harshly?”

The music teacher laughed and said, “Little Luo’s still the gutsiest.”

Luo Yu was a little taken aback when she asked, “Who is he?”

Li Jiaxing glanced at her and asked, “You don’t even know who Zhang Ye is?”

Luo Yu, still not knowing what was going on, said, “What Zhang Ye or Li Ye? I don’t know them at all.”

Zhao Mei didn’t know how to react. She said, “The song you were singing just before you came into the teachers’ office just now, wasn’t that song written and composed by Zhang Ye based upon his poem Shuidiao Getou?”

When she heard that, Luo Yu’s eyes immediately widened as she froze in her seat. After being stumped for a second, she rose from her chair and said, “Ah? That was Zhang Ye??”

Li Jiaxing said, “How could he not be?”

Luo Yu nearly fainted right there, but continued, “He—he was

wearing sunglasses and I couldn't recognize him at all! Holy shit! I've been singing that song that was written and composed by him almost everyday!"

Li Jiaxing said with a belittling attitude, "Come now, why would a P.E. teacher like you not do something else but just sing that song everyday. When you were coming into the office earlier, Teacher Zhang Ye already heard your singing. That lousy voice of yours probably left the original writer and composer feeling frustrated!"

The language teacher giggled, "Before you came in, we had already spoken to Teacher Zhang Ye for a long time about Chenchen, but we were just talking in general and letting him know what the problems were. But you, you were really unforgiving, you even accused Teacher Zhang Ye of being negligent in properly caring for his kid! No matter what, he's still a Peking University associate professor."

Luo Yu exclaimed, "I—I really did not know it was him! How could he be Chenchen's guardian? Aiyo, I've heard rumors that Zhang Ye's temper is really bad. Do you guys think that I've gotten myself into trouble now?"

"Yes."

"Yes."

"Yes."

“That’s for sure.”

“You’ve made a huge mess this time!”

All of the teachers were gleefully quipping at Luo Yu’s troubles.

Luo Yu vomited blood right there!

Chapter 623 – Zhang Ye’s Wondrous Math Lecture!

In the evening.

The rippling rays of the evening sun shone as it set.

At Jiaomen East, Zhang Ye’s rented apartment.

Standing in the open kitchen, Zhang Ye sandwiched his phone between his shoulder and cheek while his hands prepared dinner. He placed the processed fish-flavored pork slices which he had bought from the supermarket into the pan, added some seasoning, then mixed and stirred it all about with the spatula. This person did not know how to cook, but he made do with whatever he could anyway.

Zhang Ye said: “Mom.”

“I was still waiting for you to come home for dinner,” his mother said.

“Didn’t I already send you a text?” Zhang Ye asked.

His mother said: “I just saw it. So you won’t be back for a few days?”

Zhang Ye said: “Yes, I’ll be staying in Jiaomen for now as my

landlady needed to go away for some time. And I have to help her take care of the kid. Ugh, don't bring it up. Just talking about it makes me angry. The kid's school called me up to ask me to make a trip to the school today. When I was there, a group of teachers criticized me about her behavior. What a loss of face I suffered! Hmph, seeing kids behave in this way these days has given me mental trauma and severely impacted this bro's passion for children should I get married in the future. If my children turn out to be so naughty and uncontrollable in the future, I would totally get tired out."

His mother said: "You don't even have a partner yet, and you're already thinking about children?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Don't force my hand, or else I might just suddenly bring someone home on one of these days as your daughter-in-law. If she turns out to be too beautiful for you, don't be shocked. You'd better be prepared for it."

His mother happily said: "Yes, continue bragging all you want."

Zhang Ye said: "Whether I'm bragging or not, you'll find out in the future."

His mother said: "Alright, alright, your mom will wait and see."

"I need to stop talking now. I still have to prepare dinner." Zhang Ye used the spatula to stir the food in the pan.

His mother said: “Whoa, you even know how to cook now? Make sure the food is well-cooked. Don’t let the little one get a stomachache.”

“Got it.” Zhang Ye hung up and put his phone onto a clean area on top of the refrigerator before he did a taste test on the saltiness of the dish he was preparing.

Chenchen, sitting on the sofa and looking very glum, said, “Zhang Ye, I’m hungry.”

Zhang Ye grumbled under his breath, “What are you in a rush for? Just wait.”

Chenchen’s stomach had already been rumbling for quite some time now. After she had the argument in the afternoon with the teacher, she did not eat much of her food either. She shouted, “Zhang Ye! I’m hungry! Zhang Ye! I’m hungry!”

“What are you rushing for? It’s almost done!” Zhang Ye turned off the heat, put the food onto a plate, and brought it to the table.

Chenchen did not wait for him and picked up the chopsticks and began eating. When she had eaten a mouthful, she inadvertently gave a look of dislike. She said, “Zhang Ye, it’s not good.”

Zhang Ye said, “Oh, is that so?”

“It’s not good,” Chenchen insisted.

Zhang Ye gave it a taste and said, "It's not bad." Then he scooped out two bowls of rice and sat back down at the table. Picking up his chopsticks, he started eating happily and said, "Your Uncle Zhang's standard is just that. It's good enough that you have something to eat. It's definitely cooked, so don't worry about getting food poisoning." Saying that, he picked up a large portion of the food for Chenchen and put it into her bowl with his chopsticks. "Quickly eat. Your aunt definitely won't be back this week, and I don't know if she will be back next week either. You'll be sticking around me for a while, so let's just make do with whatever we can. If this is not good enough, then we'll order takeout or buy frozen dumplings tomorrow."

Chenchen thought about it for a long time before unwillingly picking up her chopsticks to continue eating.

Zhang Ye spoke as he ate, "These next several days, I will be taking care of you, so you have to listen to me. Let's have an agreement beforehand. First, you have to eat your meals at the right time and in the right quantity every day, so that when your aunt comes back, she will not see that you have lost any weight and blame me if you do. Second, you have to do your homework after dinner, if you don't have any homework or have finished it already, then you have to do your own revision until 8 PM. Your form teacher gave me a dressing down today; I don't even know how to face her. You'd better buck up so that it doesn't become necessary for me to make another trip to your school again. Oh, then third and last point, you have to go to bed by 10 PM, so no late night of watching cartoons. Did you hear all of that?"

Chenchen did not say anything.

Zhang Ye looked at her and asked again, “I’m asking you. Do you understand?”

Chenchen eventually voiced her acquiescence.

Only then was Zhang Ye satisfied. With the landlady auntie not around, the full responsibility in taking care of the child rested on his shoulders. Not only did he have to take care of her meals, he had to oversee her learning and extracurricular activities as well. Hai, it was only after taking charge that he knew of the responsibilities; taking care of a child was really tiring to the soul.

After the meal.

“Shoo, go and do your homework.”

“OK.”

“Don’t just say OK, you have to do it physically as well.”

“—OK.”

Chenchen sat herself down on Zhang Ye’s sofa, opened her schoolbag and took out a book, pencil, and eraser. She slowly started to do her homework and paused every so often.

Zhang Ye sluggishly dragged his feet to the kitchen to wash the

dishes. After a long time of not doing chores, he really did not have any motivation to move at all. Laziness was a kind of habit; once you got into the rhythm of this habit, it was extremely difficult to get out of it. This was the situation Zhang Ye was in right now. Old Wu had taken great care of him—and when he was at his parents' house, they would not let him do any chores either—so having not stayed alone for a very long time now, it was really difficult to get accustomed to this life again.

After washing all the dishes, Zhang Ye went to take a look on Chenchen. However, when he saw that she had only written a single line in her workbook, he angrily said, “What have you been doing here for so long?”

Chenchen said, “Doing my homework.”

Zhang Ye said, “Why did you take so long just to write almost nothing?”

“Zhang Ye.” Chenchen pushed her workbook to him and said, “Help me write.”

Zhang Ye stared at her and said, “Write it yourself. If you don't finish it, then I won't let you watch cartoons later. When it's time, you will go directly to bed.” After that, he ignored her and went to lie down on his bed while watching the news on TV.

Central TV news...

Entertainment news...

He was watching it with enjoyment. In the past, Zhang Ye was never too interested in the news as he found it really dry. But after he had become a celebrity, he took a liking to it, part of it being that keeping up with the news was necessary for his career. He had to be updated about the social topics and current affairs so that he could be in step with the times.

Chenchen looked up with the pencil with her hands. “Zhang Ye, you’re disturbing me.”

Zhang Ye impatiently grabbed the remote control and said, “I’ll lower the volume, continue doing your homework.”

Chenchen said, “It’s still noisy.”

Zhang Ye lowered the volume even more and said, “It should be alright now.”

“It’s still noisy, Zhang Ye. Turn it off,” Chenchen said unhappily.

Zhang Ye smacked his lips and turned off the television in annoyance. He said, “You’ve been working for quite a while now but that’s all you’ve written? You’re so troublesome. Alright, alright, the television’s off now.”

Chenchen continued to work on her homework.

Zhang Ye looked around and decided that he could only use his cell phone to browse Weibo for now. After a short time browsing, he noticed the math problem he had given at No. 2 Experimental Primary School this afternoon was posted onto Weibo. It had even attracted a heated discussion in the afternoon as it received a lot of attention from the netizens. This was something Zhang Ye had not expected. But after thinking a bit about it, when this wondrous math question was brought out in his previous world, it had also created quite a stir from many people on the internet. It was widely discussed at the beginning. Not until when everyone had gotten used to the existence of this problem did the hype die down. And so, when this wondrous “brain teaser” math problem that had not existed in this world largely filled with traditional and regular math questions appeared, it naturally attracted a lot of interest and attention from people since it was a “new style” of a math question.

They were also denouncing him?

On Weibo, many people cried out with anger, as though Zhang Ye’s elementary math question from the afternoon had inflicted damage to the self-esteem of these adults. They were all calling for him to give them a chance to make up for their loss of face!

“@ZhangYe!”

“Teacher Zhang, you better appear right now!”

“Zhang Ye, you’re so wicked and mean!”

“Give us another question! I refuse to believe that I can’t solve it!”

“Right, this time we’ll definitely get it right!”

“If you’re so good, give us another elementary math problem! I was just too careless before! It ended up with my girlfriend making fun of me for the whole afternoon! She even said that my IQ is lower than a primary school student’s! I’m so furious!”

“That question was made to trick people, it was phrased to baffle us. But if we knew what was going on beforehand, then no matter what questions you posed us, we wouldn’t have any trouble with it for sure as long as it is really just an elementary math problem.”

“Right, as long as it’s restricted to elementary math questions, we’ll solve them in a glance for sure.”

Some were calling for a challenge while others were making a scene.

Peking University’s Teacher Su Na also came forward to comment: “I suggest that Teacher Zhang start a class on Weibo and post some elementary math problems for everyone to try out.”

Since Zhang Ye was not busy with anything, he immediately replied to Su Na: “Sure.”

And so, Zhang Ye posted a separate Weibo post: “Due to popular demand and requests for a challenge, in today’s ‘Zhang Ye’s Classroom’, I shall share several questions for discussion. The same rules apply. I guarantee that it will be an elementary math problem that is meant for second or third grade students. We will see who can answer them. The time limit is an hour after I post the problem. If someone can answer all of them correctly, then I will even add a prize as a reward. If there are too many people, the prize will be given out as a lucky draw. If there aren’t that many who can answer correctly, then all those who get it right will get a prize. It can be my autograph or my calligraphy pieces, we can always discuss that later, hur hur.”

When the netizens saw this, they all gathered together over at Zhang Ye’s post!

“Wah! There’s even a prize?”

“Zhang Ye’s calligraphy works sound really good!”

“That’s great! Give us the question then! I can’t wait!”

“Count me in!”

“Me too, I’m here as well!”

At this moment, the long unseen Big Saber Bro also made an appearance: “My large saber is again again again again again again again again unable to endure the thirst! Give us the problem

quickly! Mathematics happen to be my forte!”

Yao Jiancai also appeared and said: “What’s up again?”

A Peking University teacher who was verified on Weibo joined in too. He could be considered Zhang Ye’s colleague, but as Zhang Ye had not officially been given any classes before at the Math Department, he wasn’t too familiar with this teacher. He didn’t even know him by name, but would probably know him if he saw him. The teacher said: “Let me give it a try too.”

Even a Peking University teacher had been forced to make an appearance??

In the end, many other Peking University students—whether they were Chinese Department or Math Department—also joined in. They were all eager and ready to solve the question as they were not in time this afternoon to catch the first question and had only seen it for the first time when Dean Pan’s Weibo discussed it. As such, they already knew the answer to it before they saw the questions, so there was no chance for them to even think about it. As such, many of them did not find the question to be difficult at all. After all, this was just an elementary math problem!

People from everywhere started popping up!

With the momentum from the previous wondrous math problem—and the addition of gimmickry, goading, as well as prizes as encouragement—, many Weibo users had already arrived at this post of Zhang Ye’s in no time. Everyone wanted to see what kind of

an elementary math problem Zhang Ye would pose to them, and if it was really going to another wondrous question. Surely it couldn't be more baffling and trickier than that earlier question, right?

1000 people...

5000 people...

10,000 people...

More than ten thousand netizens had arrived to join in the fun here. Before the questions were even given, the post had already been forwarded 3000 times. The scene was very grand as everyone went crazy, wanting to give the questions a try for themselves! No one believed that they could not do it!

Chapter 624 – Question After Question, The Math Questions That Made Everyone Vomit Blood!

The were countless people waiting.

“Where are the questions?”

“Teacher Zhang, hurry up!”

“We’re all waiting for them!”

“I’m going to get Zhang Ye’s calligraphy for sure!”

“Haha, if all of us answer correctly, then with tens of thousands of us winning the calligraphy prize, Teacher Zhang might not be able to complete them even after his 30th birthday!”

“Hehehe, we can finally get something out of Zhang Ye!”

“Yeah, he has always been the one winning against others. Looks like the tables have finally turned. He will lose this for sure. The wisdom of the crowd is infinite. Everyone, let’s work together to finish off Teacher Zhang!”

“Let’s shake hands.”

“Let’s build an alliance!”

“Right, if one of us cannot win against him, then let’s stand together to deal with Teacher Zhang. Even if Teacher Zhang has superhuman powers, he can’t compete with the essence of everyone’s wisdom combined together. Besides, he has already stated that it will be a second or third grade type of math question, so this time, we must show Zhang Ye how good we are!”

“Agreed!”

“Seconded!”

“Let’s get ready, everyone!”

“We even have a Peking University Math Department teacher taking part, hahahaha. That means he’s Zhang Ye’s colleague, a fellow math teacher from the country’s best education institution. Zhang Ye must not have expected a fellow colleague would join in the fun, otherwise, how would he dare to boast and even put up prizes for the correct answer. Come on, let’s all follow the Peking University math teacher’s answer! Since the answers are all publicly shown and Zhang Ye’s rules don’t forbid copying either, shouldn’t it be alright?”

“Right, there’s also support from the Peking University students. These students are all the most straight-A students among the straight-A students. I don’t believe that, with so many of us, we can’t crack some elementary math questions!”

Everyone felt confident. Along with Zhang Ye's teasing antics earlier to fan up interest, everyone was stoked and took up the challenge. If they could make Zhang Ye—who had an unblemished record in online battles—taste defeat this time, everyone would surely be delighted to see it. Even Zhang Ye's hardcore fans did not mind this outcome. You could even say they couldn't wish more for this outcome as they were the ones who were shouting and belittling Zhang Ye more than anyone else. Faced with such a scene, many people were overwhelmed. They wondered just how damn unlikeable Teacher Zhang could get!

However, Zhang Ye kept his calm and was tickled by all that was happening. He understood that this was actually how an entertainment star should be. Being belittled like this by the fans and people was actually not a reflection of them disliking you. Just like what was happening here right now, it meant that everyone actually really liked Zhang Ye.

It was time for the question!

Watched by tens of thousands of pairs of eyes, the first question was released!

The first problem of Zhang Ye's Classroom: Little Zhang is the owner of a shoe shop. A pair of shoes cost ¥20 to buy and sell for ¥30. A customer pays with a ¥50 bill, but as Little Zhang did not have any spare change, he takes the ¥50 to a neighboring shop to change for five ¥10 notes. Finally, he gives ¥20 of change to the customer. Later, when the neighboring shop discovers that the ¥50 note is counterfeit, Little Zhang has no choice but to pay them ¥50. All in all, how much money did Little Zhang lose?

“It’s just this question?”

“It looks pretty simple!”

“Haha, come on, this looks like a very normal question.”

Many people had posted their comments immediately when they saw this question. After doing some calculations, they also posted their answers onto Weibo and felt that they had answered it correctly. However, after they had posted their answers online, they were in for a shock when they discovered that even in their group, people had different answers to the question!

Some answered 20 RMB.

Some said it was 30 RMB.

There were also those who answered with 50 RMB.

They all nearly got into an argument over this.

“It’s obviously 20 RMB!”

“No, it has to be 50 RMB, do you all know how to math at all?”

“It definitely has to be 30 RMB, if it’s not, I’ll run into a wall!”

“It’s 60!”

The first question had already stumped most of the people who participated. Only then did these people realize how that was not some damned normal question at all. There was surely some trick to it somewhere, otherwise, why would they all arrive at different answers?

However, what left them truly shocked were the next set of questions!

After reading the next few questions, everyone suddenly felt that the first question was indeed just a very normal and typical elementary math question!

.....

The second problem was next.

From 1 to 10, these numbers have been divided into four groups:

1, 3, 7, 8;

10;

5, 9;

2, 4, 6.

Please explain the pattern that was used to separate them into their groups.

“Ah?”

“What is this?”

“Pattern? How is there any pattern in that ass fart of a sequence!”

“Permutations and combinations? It isn’t that either! Besides, this topic shouldn’t be covered in the syllabus for elementary school math, right? Aren’t these numbers just randomly arranged? There’s no pattern at all!”

“Your sister, what kind of questions are these!”

“I’m going crazy!”

The netizens began to be stunned by what they were looking at.

.....

Followed by the third problem.

7111=0. 8809=6. 2172=0. 6666=4. 1111=0. 2222=0. 0000=4. 5555=0.
8193=3. 8096=5. 4398=3. 9475=1. 9038=4. 3148=2.

Derive the following:

2889=?

“Holy f**k!”

“I’m gonna faint!”

“2889?”

“Is this an addition-subtraction equation? Using the above established answers to do addition and subtraction!”

“Let me check which two figures when subtracted would give 2889.”

“That’s not right, there’s no way to do add or subtract with those numbers to get 2889 at all!”

“Ahhhhhhhh!”

.....

Question 4:

This was a picture-based problem.

In the first row: The images below are aliens—followed by four pictures of organisms

In the second row: The images below are not aliens—followed by four pictures of organisms

The question came at the third row where five pictures of organisms were shown: Please circle which of the following are aliens.

“...”

“None of these pictures are the same!”

“How can we deduce anything like that?”

“In my opinion, these are all f**king aliens!”

Finally, Zhang Ye said: “Alright, it’s just these four questions for now, so everyone please give them a try. There are still 40 minutes left. If you can answer all of them correctly, there will be a prize. There are no rules; you may copy other peoples’ answers too. Just collate all of the answers and comment with a Weibo account and that is enough. Finally, I would like to assure everyone that these are really just elementary math problems for primary school

students. I won't set a question for everyone if it exceeds the level of fifth grade students."

When everyone saw this, they went even crazier!

"I'm so shocked that I have pissed my pants!"

"Heavens! Is the world of a primary school student really so terrible and scary??"

"Primary school students! You guys win! I kneel to you!"

"Kneeling as well!"

"I've knelt!"

"Firmly kneeling down!"

"I'll no longer look down on primary school students!"

Those Weibo users who were still confidently trying to show Zhang Ye earlier what they could do were now all either dumbfounded or vomiting blood!

Only at this moment did they realize just how much of a bastard Zhang Ye could be. How wondrous and terrifying could Zhang Ye's math problems get? They were basically more wondrous and more

terrifying than the most wondrous and most terrifying math questions!!

“No way, I need to give this some thought!”

“There has to be a way to answer these. Let’s put our heads together, everyone!”

“Who has the magical being known as a ‘primary school student’ in their homes? Quickly bring them out to help solve these questions!”

“Right, find a primary school student!”

“Pfft, you guys are too cute!”

“I give up! I’ve already fried my brains thinking!”

“I’ve finally realized that we’re not going to be able to enjoy ourselves seeing Zhang Ye lose. This person is a f**king psycho! He’s a psycho and so are his questions!”

“+10,000!”

“Zhang Ye, you cheat!”

“I’ve totally never seen such wondrous questions before!”

Chapter 625 – The Peking University Math Teacher Also Genuflects!

Evening, 8 PM.

Chenchen put down her pencil and held her workbook, then said, “Zhang Ye, I’ve finished my homework. I want to watch TV.”

Zhang Ye, who had been browsing Weibo all this while with a smile on his face, looked over when he heard her voice. He said, “Did you really finish your homework? Alright then, go and watch for a while.”

Chenchen grabbed the remote control and then went to turn on the television and sat down on the sofa. She switched channels until she found the channel airing a recent, popular local cartoon and sat there watching expressionlessly. This cartoon was not about some big bad wolf or little white bunny type of child-oriented cartoon. It was one that was targeted more at male teenagers and even men in their twenties. Because the premise of the cartoon was about wuxia, there were fighting and romance spun into it. So even for someone at Zhang Ye’s age, if he wasn’t too picky about it, he could watch it if he wanted to give it a try.

“Zhang Ye.”

“What now?”

“The new episode has finished airing.”

“Then that’s all you get to watch today.”

“I want to watch it from the start. Help me to do that.”

“Do it yourself.”

“I don’t know how, Zhang Ye. Do it for me.”

Zhang Ye could not take the nagging and forced himself to get out of bed to take the remote control to play back the episode from the beginning. Task completed.

Chenchen started watching her cartoon and did not bother Zhang Ye anymore.

Zhang Ye was happy and continued to nonchalantly interact with the netizens on Weibo. In a short period of time, those questions of his had also gone viral like the wondrous math problem from the afternoon. More and more Weibo users had gathered wave after wave to try the question, not believing that they could not solve it, vowing that they had to do so to differentiate their IQs from the primary school students.

“I’m here!”

“How many more minutes are there?”

“There’s still about five minutes left, hurry up!”

“I’ve solved one of the questions, but I don’t know if it’s the right answer.”

“Hurry, hurry, hurry, we’re almost out of time! Everyone, don’t give up, let’s draw on the wisdom of the masses and try together. If not, we can just copy that Peking University math teacher’s answer, but we must not let Zhang Ye have the last laugh!”

“Agreed!”

“Brothers and sisters, let’s attack!”

“Slay Teacher Zhang!”

Zhang Ye thought that this was really fun, and on top of that, his objectives were also met. He had started “Zhang Ye’s Classroom,” first, due to everyone’s request. Second, for fun. Third, it was because Zhang Ye noticed the situation was just right, so he used this chance to increase his popularity as well. He took every opportunity he saw that could help him increase his popularity as a celebrity. After all you could never have enough and there was really no need to nitpick on how to get more.

He had already risen up to B-list celebrity now, but to put it plainly, he was just the last place celebrity in the B-list rankings, the weakest one of all. Together with the person chasing him, Central TV’s Spring Festival Gala host Chen Ye—who was in the

top spot of the C-list ranking, still eyeing to get his position back with a lot of news and updates—, it showed that he was not letting Zhang Ye have it easy. And so, Zhang Ye's online math class this time would definitely play an important role in helping him pull away from Chen Ye in the popularity rankings. He had to firmly grab hold of his position in the B-list celebrity rankings.

In this world, the Celebrity Rankings Index was an aggregation of data from many outlets, like the search rankings of a celebrity on various websites, number of Weibo followers, number of screen appearances, comments, and reviews of works, etc. Combining all those data, a popularity score would be derived and thus rank the celebrities accordingly. Whether it was really an objective way of collecting data, Zhang Ye did not know, but he knew that the people of this world all depended and watched this Celebrity Rankings Index very closely and recognized it as the authoritative aggregator. As for why each tier of celebrity rankings had limited spots in them, Zhang Ye had already read up on the explanation given by the official website which said that people follow a limited number of public figures, as each person's attention span was limited. For example, Xiaoming might like 20 celebrities, and to him, they all had a different ranking, some higher, others lower, some that he liked more than the others and also some that he would soon forget about. This was what was meant by a person's attention span was limited. So when he suddenly notices and likes a new celebrity, then the celebrity that was ranked last in his mind would probably be forgotten. Unless there were some new works or news about them, Xiaoming was unlikely to ever pay attention to them anymore.

The people's attention span was limited, there was only so much of the pie that celebrities could get.

—This was the official reason why the spots in the Celebrity Rankings Index were limited.

Of course, if the market expanded in the future, be it due to rural urbanization, a rise in living standards, or increased spiritual fulfillment of people—leading to an increase of people who used to be unconcerned with celebrities from the entertainment circle becoming concerned—then the pie would become bigger as well. When that happened, the authorities would also take it into consideration and update the design of the Celebrity Rankings Index. They would likely increase the number of spots available in each tier accordingly. However, such occurrences were rare, not even likely to happen once in two years, so it was pointless to depend on such events. Rather, it was safe to depend on yourself. Zhang Ye understood very clearly his plan and knew that it was a priority for him to stabilize his popularity score at this moment. As long as he could do that, then he could consider his next step to chase after the other big shots in the B-list. Otherwise, all that he had done so far would be for naught. But looking at the current situation, it seemed that the effects were far-reaching and had even over-fulfilled his objective.

It was time, the deadline was over.

It was time to announce the answers.

Zhang Ye posted on Weibo: “OK, question time is over. Those who have not submitted their answers yet, you have one more minute to do so.”

“It’s already been an hour?”

“Ah!”

“Wait, wait, wait!”

“I’m almost done!”

“Just wait for a while more! Let me do a few more calculations!”

Zhang Ye’s colleague—the Peking University math teacher—also submitted his answer at the last moment. Suddenly, countless netizens went to look and copy his answers and used it as their own.

When Zhang Ye saw this, he dismissed it with a laugh. Then he began to give out the answers to the question one by one. Of course, he had to also include the explanation and solving process, as all these questions he had set were very tricky. If he did not do that and just gave an answer, the people who could not understand would not know why it would be the correct answer. They would not take it just like that, so Zhang Ye would have to help them to the end by giving the answer along with explanation.

The first question...

The second question...

The third question...

One by one the answers were revealed!

After everyone saw them, they fell over like ninepins!

“Pfft!”

“Oh god!”

“So that’s how it is!”

“It really turned out to be elementary math problems?”

“The question that needed us to count the closed loops has left me kneeling!”

“Damn, how could this question turn out to be so simple? I even f**king thought it has to do with permutations and combinations! What a rip-off! Teacher Zhang, you’re really too much of a rip-off!”

“...”

“I finally understand why Teacher Zhang has made so many enemies! Teacher Zhang, if you keep scamming people this way, you won’t be left with any friends soon! I’m gonna cry!”

“F**k! All the questions are such scams! They’re all so deceptive!”

When they saw the questions an hour ago, they were already cursing at their mothers, but when they saw the answers now and realized it was so simple, they felt even more aggrieved. They started throwing a tantrum as one by one everyone started cursing at Zhang Ye hoping that he would get constipation or step on a banana peel and slip! How on earth did he come up with so many extremely wondrous questions!?

“Who got them right?”

“Let’s see who got them right.”

“I got them wrong.”

“I got them wrong too.”

“The questions are really not difficult, but it was really too tricky!”

Many of those who had copied the Peking University math teacher’s answer had realized now that he had also gotten one of his answers wrong. It was the answer for the second question that asked to explain the pattern that the numbers were separated by.

1, 3, 7, 8—1st tone.

10—2nd tone.

5, 9—3rd tone.

2, 4, 6—4th tone.

This was a question that combined the testing of language and math!

The netizens were utterly defeated.

“Even a Peking University math teacher could not get them all right?”

“We were totally defeated with no survivors?”

“It really seems like no one got them all right at all!”

“We were really wiped out? Oh my god!”

Those Peking University Math Department scholars were also downed. None of them got all four questions correct. The most they had were three questions correct.

Yao Jiancai said: “I think it’s better that I just go to bed. When the answers were released, I realized that I could not even understand what two of the questions were asking when faced with the answers!”

Peking University's Su Na: "I didn't even get one..."

Big Saber Bro was the same. Fan Yingyun had only gotten one question correct. Zhang Ye knew about Big Saber Bro's math standard. As a world-renowned hacker and someone who was proficient in programming and code cracking, her math standards shouldn't be bad at all. With things like 010101, they often deal with binary, however having a good standard in math did not mean that they would be good at math problems. When it came to answering math questions, what was most important was the way they interpreted the question.

This was an outcome that Zhang Ye had predicted. The first question had already filtered out 90% of the people who took part, the second question continued to attack them, while those who could do the third question were already considered non-existent. Back in Zhang Ye's previous world, when people saw these questions, they would be able to answer them almost immediately. But that was because most of those people had already seen the answers before, or had encountered the questions before, so they knew the trick to answering them. As such, a small group of people could solve the questions. However, it was different in this world. Everyone's learning and mindset of testing over here were all considerably more traditional and rigid. They had never encountered such questions before, so they did not have the fundamentals or flexibility of thought to deal with them. Being wholly wiped out this way was not an unexpected outcome at all.

The people were utterly defeated!

Zhang Ye took home a flawless victory.

The Peking University math teacher stood forward to humbly say: “When I saw these questions, together with this afternoon’s question, I suddenly broke out in a cold sweat and couldn’t help but think about something. It’s lucky that the primary school test, secondary school exams, or even the national college entrance exams did not have Professor Zhang Ye taking part in the setting of papers. If that were the case, then without a doubt, it would be a total nightmare for those test and exam candidates!”

“That’s right!”

“Damn, I’m taking my national college entrance exam this year, please don’t scare me like that!”

“Surely that won’t happen, right? Please don’t ever look for Zhang Ye to set the exam papers! If this person set a paper, then the straight-A students from Peking University and Tsinghua University might not get more than 20 points. They might even end up with 0!”

The netizens were also shocked by this. Many of them were students. If someday they faced such questions in their exams, then it would really be unimaginable. And besides, not to forget that Zhang Ye had only posed these elementary math problems, if he really set a few junior high, high school, or university level questions, then wouldn’t that make everyone unable to do anything? Who would dare thump their chests and say for sure that they could answer Zhang Ye’s questions?

No one would dare do that!

Look at how the Peking University math teacher was left genuflecting in the face of these questions!

On Weibo, an authoritative person in the field of education was also attracted by these elementary math problems. He appeared and said: “After the answers to these questions were revealed, it showed that they were really not difficult at all in the first place, but the people who could really answer them correctly were just too few and far between! Zhang Ye’s brain is truly a treasure of the mathematics world. These exciting and wondrous questions have also taught the education world something today. I have a feeling that in future exams and tests, we might be headed towards this new direction of development. In the past, our tests and exams were too corrupt and obsoletely structured. They’re no longer able to keep up with the times. But Zhang Ye has now shown us a new direction that we could head towards!”

Bonus: Zhang Ye's Classroom

1. Little Zhang is the owner of a shoe shop. A pair of shoes cost ¥20 to buy and sell for ¥30. A customer pays with a ¥50 bill, but as Little Zhang did not have any spare change, he takes the ¥50 to a neighboring shop to change for five ¥10 notes. Finally, he gives ¥20 of change to the customer. Later, when the neighboring shop discovers that the ¥50 note is counterfeit, Little Zhang has no choice but to pay them ¥50. All in all, how much money did Little Zhang lose?

2. From 1 to 10, these numbers have been divided into four groups:

1, 3, 7, 8;

10;

5, 9;

2, 4, 6.

Please explain the pattern that was used to separate them into their groups.

3. $7111=0$. $8809=6$. $2172=0$. $6666=4$. $1111=0$. $2222=0$. $0000=4$. $5555=0$.
 $8193=3$. $8096=5$. $4398=3$. $9475=1$. $9038=4$. $3148=2$.

Derive the following:

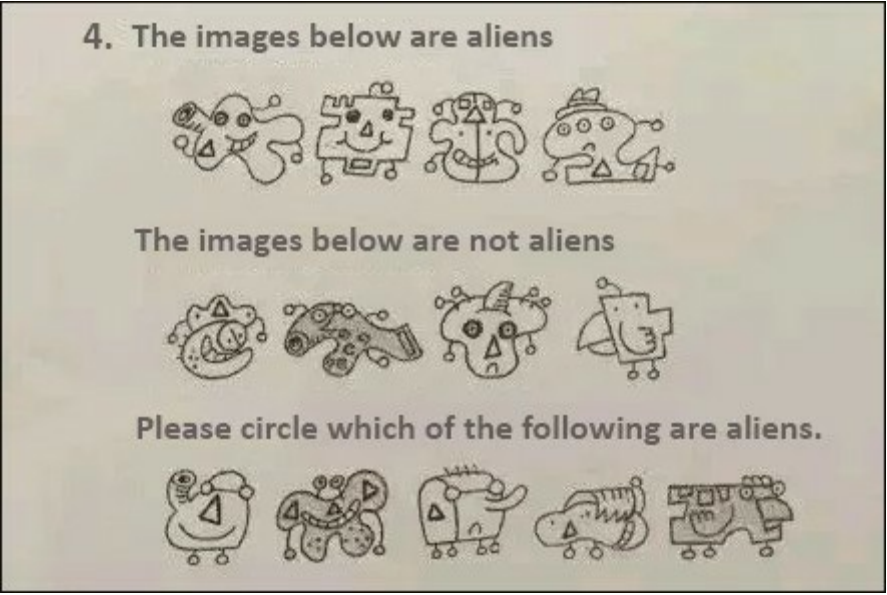
$2889=?$

4: This is a picture-based problem.

In the first row: The images below are aliens—followed by four pictures of organisms

In the second row: The images below are not aliens—followed by four pictures of organisms

In the third row: Please circle which of the following are aliens.



Chapter 626 – Playing The Lottery Draw Again!

A few professionals and industry insiders had very high praises as well.

These few math problems were widely discussed among the netizens.

A few forums even stickied a post that included Zhang Ye's elementary math problems onto their front page, letting forum participants who did not know about the Weibo "class" that Zhang Ye had held earlier to try it out for themselves as well. All of them also fell for the trap of the questions and were complaining in frustration, sending mentions to @ZhangYe and denouncing him for the nth time today!

"I'm so angry right now that I could cry!"

"These problems are really too frustrating!"

"It's not the questions that are frustrating, it is Teacher Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang, show yourself. We promise that we won't beat you to death!"

"You can't cheat us like this!"

Zhang Ye had enraged the masses, and his crimes were too numerous to mention.

However, when Zhang Ye saw this, he was already laughing and getting off Weibo. It was time to go. He looked at his watch and saw that it was already 9:50 PM. Having had some fun with the netizens, he did not know that it was already this late, so he turned back and had a look at Chenchen, only to see her sitting on the sofa and still watching the cartoon, not blinking at all.

“Switch it off, now,” Zhang Ye got out of bed and said.

Chenchen did not move but just said, “Let me watch a little more.”

Zhang Ye said with a straight face, “We already agreed that you’d go to bed at 10 PM. Don’t think that just because your aunt is not around, no one will make sure of that. Quickly, go wash your face and then go to bed.”

Chenchen continued staring at the television screen and said, “OK.”

Zhang Ye simply turned off the TV and then carried her, saying, “Let’s go.”

Chenchen’s little face showed her unhappiness.

Zhang Ye carried her and walked casually to the bathroom.

Chenchen was too short, so Zhang Ye turned on the tap for warm water for her to wash her face and got a new toothbrush and put on some toothpaste for her to brush her teeth. He told her, “There, brush your teeth. Heh, look at me, do you think I have it easy taking care of you? When your aunt gets back, I’m going to make sure she gives me a year of rental for free.”

Chenchen, who was brushing her teeth, gave a faint ‘hur hur’ to that.

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said, “Do you want to go back to your aunt’s place to sleep or do you want to sleep here?”

Chenchen spat out the toothpaste and said, “Sleep here.”

“Alright then, I’ll let you have the bed temporarily while I’ll sleep on the sofa.” Zhang Ye was still very considerate like an adult should be and did not make Chenchen sleep on the sofa.

When she was done washing up, Zhang Ye also washed his own face. When he came out, Chenchen had already crept into bed, pulling the blanket over herself with both hands and lying down, looking rather cute while doing that.

“Do you feel comfortable with that pillow?”

“Yes.”

“Is it cold?”

“Not cold.”

“OK, go the sleep then, good night.”

“—OK.”

Zhang Ye conveniently turned off the lights and only left a desk lamp on since he was not intending to rest so early anyway. In recent days, as he did not have any work, the time he went to sleep was also getting later and later, so he was still feeling quite awake at the moment as he lay on the sofa.

What should he do?

Without landing a job first, it felt quite meaningless to do anything else!

What Zhang Ye needed urgently right now was a stable television program that could let him shine on stage. His initial goal of turning into a B-list celebrity this year had already been achieved before the middle of the year, so needless to say, his next goal was definitely to aim for the A-list rankings. To this end, he definitely needed a stable program that could let him achieve a large increase in popularity. However, a good job would be great to have but unable to be sought. Zhang Ye knew that this was not a matter that could be rushed; all he could do was increase his capability to compete and raise his level. When that happened, even if his potential employer felt that his character had shortcomings, his flaws would not belittle his potential.

For example, Zhang Ye's recent hard work was all for that moment. Filming a movie, selling a program, throwing out wondrous math problems and rising into the B-list rankings—all of these made him feel that a job wasn't that far away anymore and a lot of television stations were probably already assessing and measuring his worth. It's not that he was blindly confident about himself. In fact he was being very objective in his own assessment, knowing that a B-list professional host like him with a large and stable fan base would surely move a lot of television stations. You should know that in the current industry the number of hosts able to reach the level of a B-list celebrity were readily countable with the fingers of both hands, probably numbering at around eight or nine only. Anyone in this group of hosts could easily be considered in the class of being pillars for their employers.

Well, it was time for a lottery draw then.

He was going to try his luck and also do it in preparation for his new job.

As no one but him could see the game ring's virtual screen, he wasn't afraid that Chenchen would discover it, so he brought it up directly there to check how many reputation points he had available to use.

—31 million reputation points.

Just some days ago when he was trying to look for some work, Zhang Ye had activated his upgraded Lucky Halo and spent all of

his reputation points, so these 31 million points were all gained after that. Come to think of it, his reputation points had gone up really quickly. As Zhang Ye was not the host for Do You Remember and also did not make an appearance on that show, the reputation points he would gain from it were definitely quite limited. Most of these 31 million reputation points were probably gained from the movie Grandmasters. As a supporting cast member and taking on the antagonist role, Zhang Ye felt quite satisfied that he was able to gain so many reputation points from the job. If he ever took on a lead role some day in a movie that could surpass 300 million in box office earnings, wouldn't he be able to gain a crazy amount of reputation points??

Hai, I guess there's no point in thinking that far. Just concentrate on what's in front of my eyes.

Zhang Ye knew that he should not bite off more than he could chew. Whatever was in the future, he could talk about that later. What mattered most was what was before him.

Come on!

He opened up the Lottery Draw (Two) interface.

This was the lottery draw that was unlocked after the system update, with each attempt at the slot machine costing 10 million reputation points. Zhang Ye did not hesitate at all here and just went ahead to purchase a pull.

It began!

The icons on the slot machine window spun at a very fast speed!

Stats Category...

Empty...

Empty...

Consumption Category...

Empty...

Skills Category...

The icons kept changing as it rolled by in a dazzling blur!

In the past, it was possible to predict the where the needle would land as the needle spin was coming to a stop in Lottery Draw (One). But Lottery Draw (Two) was not the same, as it employed the sliding icon movement encased in a window and was much more precise, thus not allowing the player to predict where it would land. As he saw that the slot machine was slowing down, Zhang Ye did not blink at all and just kept staring hard for the outcome.

Ba da.

Ba da.

The icons slid past one at a time.

Suddenly, one of the icons looked as though it still had some momentum and was about to continue sliding downwards, but without a warning, it seemingly lost all that energy. With a da, it came to a stop!

Zhang Ye's eyes went blank!

The final icon indicated was: Empty!

The 10 million reputation points were flushed down the drain! He did not receive any prizes!

Zhang Ye felt a great pain and clenched his teeth disgruntled. He ran to the bathroom to wash his hands and then came back immediately to spend another 10 million to play the Lottery Draw (Two) again!

Again!

I won't believe this!

The slot machine began rolling again, spinning as the icons slid down very quickly, looking like a blur at first, before slowing down after a while.

Ba da—Consumption Category.

Ba da—Special Category.

Zhang Ye was calling out repeatedly in his mind, asking for it to stop right there!

Ultimately, the slot machine did not follow his will as it went ba da again and slid down once more and stopped!

Empty!

It was “empty” again!

Zhang Ye’s face turned green. F**k, what’s with this bro’s luck today? It was 20 million! And he had just thrown it out like that? Without getting anything in return? He hated this to the core and was already cursing the Lottery Draw (Two) all the way to its 18 generations of ancestors! What a scam! A big fat scam! The update system’s new Lottery Draw (Two) was different from Lottery Draw (One). For Lottery Draw (One), although there were chances that he would receive empty treasure chests, but in the one year of playing Lottery Draw (One), he had only received those treasure chests once or twice. However, for Lottery Draw (Two), it could be seen just from the previous draws that the “empty” icon would appear once after every consumption and stats category icons. There were even some cases where two “empty” icons appeared twice in a row. Based on what was observed, the chances of getting an “empty” reward was really too large. Just like today, with his

luck, he had done everything in vain. A good 20 million worth of reputation points were gone just like that!

In the past, whenever Zhang Ye played the lottery draw, even though there were cases when he had failed to get anything, overall, his luck was still on the better side. For example, he had gotten the rarer Special Category items which allowed him to purchase items from the merchant shop quite a few times. The chances of landing on the Special Category was only a few percentage points. On top of that, even though he had not received any good prizes at the beginning, it would usually end up with him getting something that wasn't too bad. But today, Zhang Ye had finally made a huge loss, as luck did not seem to be with him at all.

It was time to stop! This experience left him with too much apprehension!

Zhang Ye clicked on the screen and went to Lottery Draw (One)'s menu instead. Although the prizes here were not as good as Lottery Draw (Two)'s items and were miles apart in quality, Lottery Draw (One) was much safer. The chances of not getting a prize was very low, so he could still get something from here and not just waste his reputation points. In times of poor luck, Zhang Ye did not hesitate and chose the lower grade Lottery Draw instead!

It cost 100,000 per play.

Soon, the needle on the wheel started spinning!

One round...

Five rounds...

Ten rounds...

It started slowing down and the likely outcome was also getting clearer.

When Zhang Ye saw the needle was slowing down at the Stats Category which was quite a large area, he considered for a moment, thinking about how he had hardly ever increased stakes for this category of prizes. His reputation points were mainly spent on the Stats Category of prizes and he had neglected the Stats Category all this while. Wanting to balance out his stats with the previous items like the Fruit of Charm or Fruit of Growth which weren't bad items, he decided and immediately put in the additional stakes!

How much should he add?

Why not a hundred stakes!

He confirmed his additional stakes and spent another 10 million reputation points!

Finally, the needle continued spinning at a very slow pace and eventually stopped in the Stats Category area. A rush of 101 Treasure Chests (Small) spilled out from the interface for him!

Zhang Ye was not too interested to know what he had received as he felt that anything would be good enough for him, as long as it wasn't empty!

Open!

Opening up the treasure chest, a glow emitted out from within!

[Fruit of Agility] x 101: Takes effect after consumption, increases agility of user.

It was this again?

The Fruit of Agility again?

Zhang Ye remembered that he had received this item previously just before he had decided to do the system upgrade. He had gotten 20 of it at that time, so if he “ate” the ones he got today, he would have increased his agility by 121 fruits? This item was not exactly useless, but it didn't seem to mean much either?

Zhang Ye's nearly cried. How terrible! Today's lottery draws were all really terrible, but what could he do about it? It's not like he could ask for a refund after playing it, so he just held back his tears and “ate” all of the Fruits of Agility one by one. He had tested this item before after eating it the last time. To be clear, this item did not really increase agility in the traditional sense of the word,

but mainly increased a person's reaction speed instead. As it turned out, after eating these 101 Fruits of Agility, Zhang Ye moved his arm and felt that he was much more agile than before. His movements seemed lighter as his body completed a move almost immediately after the brain had issued the command. Compared to a normal person, he was really much quicker, though the increase in speed was so minute that it wouldn't be noticeable to the naked eye.

Hai, forget it.

Every little thing mattered. Besides, who knew if this agility would help him some time in the future. Based on his experience and real world situations, every time after he had received an item in the lottery draw, no matter how trashy an item it was, it would always turn out to be helpful and practical for him. It was only a matter of knowing when to use it or whether it was used in the right situation or not.

Zhang Ye consoled himself and ended the lottery draw. Right now, he was only left with a miserable 1 million reputation points, so he decided he would probably keep it just in case of an emergency.

Chapter 627 – The Olive Branch Held Out By Central TV!

It was pretty late.

On a moonless night.

Bored, Zhang Ye was busily clicking the mouse as he read the news online. He was feeling a bit unusual because he had eaten a hundred-plus Fruit of Agility. In the past, he was used to his old body's natural reaction speed but now his reflexes had increased by manyfold. In the split second after his brain gave orders, his body made the movements. The results were such that when Zhang Ye was probably just thinking of moving the mouse cursor, his hand already moved. He was still not used to the speed as it was much too fast and caught him off guard.

Around him, Zhang Ye felt that there were a few people who could reach this kind of fast reaction speed. For example, Big Saber Bro, Fan Yingyun, the world-class hacker. Zhang Ye had witnessed Big Saber Bro's reflexes before during the battle between her and the enemy hacker, so she could also likely achieve such fast reaction speeds. And then there was Rao Aimin, the Chinese martial arts expert. She could probably do it too. However, this was only Zhang Ye's assumption since he had not really seen Rao Aimin using her actual martial arts. Normally, Old Rao only caused a small ruckus and did not really reveal her true ability in front of outsiders. That was why Zhang Ye did not know what Old Rao's true abilities were, so he could only make a guess.

No matter what, the reaction speed of the two of them definitely

surpassed many average people but they were used to their reaction speeds as they were naturally gifted or probably trained bit by bit in later days. But Zhang Ye was not like that. The agility skill that he learned in the blink of an eye needed some time to be digested.

There was movement on the bed.

“Zhang Ye.” Chenchen suddenly sat up sleepily.

Zhang Ye looked over and said, “What’s the matter why aren’t you asleep yet?” After he finished speaking, he was a little stunned as even though he spoke like he usually did, his reaction speed had increased multiple times. His speech also became faster just like his movements. He only used less than a second, or the blink of an eye, to finish his sentence. It was so fast that even he could not clearly hear what he had just said.

How inconvenient!

His mouth was moving way too fast!

His thoughts almost could not keep up with his mouth!

Zhang Ye tried very hard to slow down his speech. “What’s the matter? What are you calling me for?”

Chenchen said as she fought her droopy eyelids, “Zhang Ye, go to sleep.”

Zhang Ye acknowledged, "I'm not tired or in a rush to sleep yet. Let me read some more news for now."

Chenchen repeated, "Zhang Ye, go to sleep."

Zhang Ye said, "Just go to sleep. I didn't switch on any sound so it won't disturb you at all. Hurry up and go to sleep. You still have to go to school tomorrow!" Gradually, his talking speed increased again. Zhang Ye felt helpless at this and purposely tried to slow it down a bit. "Don't bother me. I'll sleep after midnight."

A moment later, Chenchen went back to bed and fell asleep again.

Meanwhile, Zhang Ye continued to read the news and think about his own matters. After a while, as he was thinking hard about his career plans from here, he suddenly noticed a small figure walking wobbly toward him.

It was Chenchen.

Zhang Ye was surprised.

Zhang Ye saw Chenchen holding his down-filled pillow walking clumsily to the front of his computer desk. Her eyes were almost closed and she looked very drowsy. After that, she pulled a small chair over and climbed onto it to sit down. Then she placed the pillow just beside the laptop and fell asleep after putting her head

down.

Zhang Ye was speechless, “What are you doing?”

Sleep-talking Chenchen let out a mutter.

“Heh, you should go and sleep on the bed.” Zhang Ye said, “I’ve given you such a nice bed to sleep on but you still want to come here and lie on the desk? Get up, get up, don’t sleep like that. When tomorrow comes, you’ll suffer from back pains due to stiff neck.” Saying that, he gave Chenchen a few nudges to wake her.

Chenchen sat up holding her pillow.

Zhang Ye said helplessly, “Take it that I succumb to you. Alright, alright, will it be fine if I turn off the computer? I’ll also sleep now.” He stretched out his hands and carried Chenchen over to the bed, then covered her with a blanket and said, “Go to sleep now.”

He grabbed some blankets and coverlets, went to the sofa, and lay down on it.

Five minutes passed.

10 minutes.

Just as Zhang Ye was falling asleep, he felt the cushion beneath his legs moving and he sat up in shock. Then he realized Chenchen

who was hugging the pillow had moved slowly towards him again. Zhang Ye had already occupied the whole length of the sofa as it was not big enough, and he could not even straighten his legs. Chenchen sat on the armrest of the sofa, and laid down while hugging the pillow with her back on the armrest. Her little head was like an eggplant dangling off the plant, and looked like it would fall off at any moment.

Zhang Ye was totally defeated by this sight, “What are you trying to do?”

Chenchen did not say anything as she was extremely sleepy.

“Didn’t I already switch off the computer?” Zhang Ye said, “Why are you squeezing in when there is hardly any space left? If you’re not going to sleep in the bed, then I’ll take it.”

Chenchen was still motionless.

Zhang Ye glanced at her, coming to a realization, and said, “Do you need someone beside you so that you can fall asleep?” Although the little kid did not reply Zhang Ye knew what to do. Heh, she should have said so. And here he was wondering why she kept asking him to go to bed or coming towards him, making Zhang Ye not know how to react. Previously, when Chenchen lived with her aunt, Old Rao would sleep with Chenchen on the same bed. Now that her aunt went out of town, she was unused to having no one beside her. After all, she was still only an eight-year-old child.

Zhang Ye carried her again and said, “Come, let’s sleep on the bed. This time you should sleep properly and not wander around anymore.” Walking towards the bedside, he pulled aside the blanket and covered Chenchen with it. Then Zhang Ye took off his slippers and laid down as well. He then muttered to himself, “Heh, the bed is the most comfortable place to sleep.”

Chenchen rolled over and said, “Zhang Ye.”

Zhang Ye yawned and asked, “What’s the matter again?”

Chenchen said sleepily, “Tell me a story.”

“Whoa, you acting like a lord now? Your Uncle Zhang is sleepy and almost falling asleep, and yet you still want me to tell a story? Besides, I thought you didn’t like my types of stories and even said that they were childish before?” Zhang Ye grunted.

Chenchen said, “Zhang Ye, tell me a story.”

Zhang Ye said, “I don’t care.”

“Zhang Ye.”

“Fine, stop calling, what do you want to hear?”

“—anything.”

“I’m scared when people say anything. Let me think a little. Never mind, I’ll tell you a new story.” Zhang Ye patted Chenchen’s small head and then said, “The story is called Cinderella. A long time ago, there was a wife of a rich man. She had a serious illness. During her last moments, she asked for her only daughter to be by her side and told her, ‘Dear daughter, when I die, I will protect and bless you from the Nine Springs.’ Saying that, she closed her eyes and passed away.”

He didn’t know if she was asleep or listening.

Zhang Ye gradually slowed down his storytelling, and then fell asleep at some point in time as well.

The next day.

Early in the morning.

Chenchen’s voice sounded in his ears, “Zhang Ye, wake up, I’m hungry.”

Zhang Ye pulled her away and said, “Don’t disturb me, let me sleep a while longer.”

Chenchen continued to push at him and said, “Zhang Ye, I’m hungry.”

Zhang Ye forced his eyes open and looked at his watch impatiently. Seeing that it was only 6:30 AM, he closed his eyes and covered himself with the blanket immediately and said, “Let me sleep for another ten minutes.”

Chenchen shouted at him in her childish voice, “Zhang Ye!”

Zhang Ye ignored her and continued sleeping soundly.

When he opened his eyes again, it was almost 7 AM. His nose caught a whiff of a fragrant aroma. He could make out that it was composed of two aromas with a quick analysis. It was the fragrance of soup dumplings and something else that smelled like egg drop soup? Yes, that must be it!

Gururu, a sound rumbled from his stomach.

He got up and saw Chenchen standing on a wooden stool, in the process of cooking in the open kitchen. She was stirring something in the pot with a pair of chopsticks and adding what seemed like MSG into it. Zhang Ye got out from bed and exclaimed, “Yo, so it’s really egg drop soup? Did I still have eggs in my house? Good. Not bad, you did well. Oh right, there’s still soup dumplings on the table? Where did you buy them?”

Chenchen said unhappily, “Outside of the district.”

Zhang Ye asked, “Where did you get the money?”

Chenchen said with a sullen face, “I got it from your wallet.”

Zhang Ye hurriedly went forward to help out and said, “Look at that sullen face of yours. Are you angry?”

After turning off the heat, Chenchen took a towel and wiped her hands clean like a small adult. She started to serve the soup, and although her movement was clumsy, there were no spills. After serving her own portion, she ignored Zhang Ye’s portion and jumped right off the small wooden stool. She said angrily, “Zhang Ye, you don’t have the bearings of an adult at all.”

Zhang Ye found an excuse and said, “Isn’t it quite nice that we can share the chores like this. Generally, Uncle Zhang will take care of you, but when I’m tired, you will take care of me.”

Chenchen shot a glance at him. “Hur Hur.”

“Heh, this soup smells nice, let me have a bowl too.” Zhang Ye did not stand on ceremony and ladled some soup for himself. Chenchen had previously cooked once before, so Zhang Ye knew that she could cook. Although she was still not good at it and even needed a stool to reach the stove, this little kid’s cooking skills were still good enough. At least it was much better than Zhang Ye’s, and could be considered that she had inherited Rao Aimin’s cooking skills. “Come on, let’s eat.”

However, Chenchen was already helping herself to all those soup dumplings.

In the blink of an eye, three soup dumplings were already gone.

Zhang Ye anxiously said, "Leave some for me!"

Chenchen ignored him and continued stuffing the food into her mouth, saying, "I bought it."

"That was my money!" Zhang Ye also moved his chopsticks forward to snatch, but when he realized he was going to fail, he even resorted to using his hands to grab the last three soup dumplings.

Chenchen was ready to fight him for them. "Zhang Ye, give them to me!"

"Haha!" Zhang Ye chuckled heartily.

Such a big commotion during breakfast, as both of them nearly end up fighting each other for the food, was still considerably very "fun and enjoyable" on the whole.

After the meal, Zhang Ye was humming a song as he sent Chenchen to school. He parked his car on the road across from the school and said, "Alright, go to school now."

Chenchen opened the car door with a struggle and got out of the car.

Zhang Ye reminded her, “Don’t be naughty, listen to the teachers!”

Chenchen turned around and asked, “Will you come to pick me up in the afternoon?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Yes, I’ll be coming.”

When Chenchen turned around, she saw two of her classmates and followed them. Together they crossed the road and went beyond the school gates. The little one’s popularity was also getting better with each passing day.

When Chenchen’s figure vanished from his sight, Zhang Ye suddenly had the thought that it was actually quite interesting to have a child at home.

Time to go home then.

It was time to go back home to continue this morning’s sleep again.

When he was about to drive off, even before he could step on the accelerator, there was a dong dong dong sound. A middle-aged man was standing outside and knocking on the glass window with a smile.

Zhang Ye lowered the car window and asked, “What’s the matter?”

The middle-aged man asked, “Are you Zhang Ye?”

“Yes, I am.” Zhang Ye thought he was just someone who wanted his signature.

But it turned out that the middle-aged man had taken out a business card to give to him. He said, “My child is also studying in No. 2 Experimental Primary School but he is in sixth grade. I heard about the matter at school from my child yesterday, and thought that you would be sending yours to school today as well. So I actually waited out here and indeed saw you sending your child to school as I had expected. So, initially I was suppose to give you a call this morning during work, but it’s even better that I managed to meet you here instead. That would save us a lot of time in coordinating a meeting together.”

Zhang Ye took the business card to have a look.

—Jiang Yuan

Deputy Director, Central TV Department 1.

This person was one of the leaders of Central TV??

Zhang Ye was stunned with surprise as he opened the door and got out of the car. He formally shook hands with him and said, “So it’s Deputy Director Jiang.”

Jiang Yuan smiled and said, “Then I’ll get straight to the point. Central TV Department 1 intends to invite you to join our television station. I wonder if you would be interested in joining us?”

Huh?

Central TV Department 1 inviting me to join them?

The first thought that came to Zhang Ye’s mind was one of disbelief!

Chapter 628 – Signing The Contract With Central TV!

Beside the primary school.

A small coffee house along Nanxinhua Avenue. At this time, the coffee house was not in operation yet as their opening time was a little later in the morning. The staff were doing the accounts inside, but the door was left unlocked.

Jiang Yuan pushed open the door and asked, “Are you open?”

A waitress said, “Sorry, we’re not open yet.”

Zhang Ye followed from behind and went inside, saying, “We just need to borrow a place to sit and discuss something.”

“That won’t do, we’re—” The waitress didn’t finish.

The coffee house owner who was behind her immediately recognized him and said, “Aiyo, isn’t that Zhang Ye! To what do we owe the honor? We’re open, we’re open, please have a seat inside with your friend.”

“OK, thanks so much, boss,” Zhang Ye said with a smile.

The boss answered with a big smile, “Don’t need to thank me. You’ve already graced our little shop with your presence. May we

take a picture with you later? So that I can put it up on our wall and have a chance to brag to other people.”

Zhang Ye said happily, “Sure, no problem.”

The coffee was served very quickly.

The coffee house owner said, “I won’t bother the two of you then.”

The boss left. Zhang Ye and Jiang Yuan were seated at a quiet corner in the coffee house.

Jiang Yuan smiled as he drank his coffee and said, “Well, the coffee tastes rather good. If not for you, we wouldn’t have had a chance to have coffee here today.” Then he quickly changed the topic. “So how about it? Are you interested in the matter that I brought up earlier?”

Zhang Ye did not answer directly but instead asked, “Why did you ask me?”

Jiang Yuan also asked, “Why not you?”

Zhang Ye said, “Being invited to join your television station is an honor and of course I would be interested. Who hasn’t heard of Central TV Department 1’s name before? It is the big brother of the domestic television station industry and whether in terms of audience coverage, qualifications, or experience, it is the number

one in the country, the mothership of all television stations, so why would I not be interested? But in the past, I created some issues at the crosstalk competition and caused my relationship with Central TV to become quite bad. I don't suppose there are too many people there who have good impressions of me?"

Back then, Zhang Ye had created a storm at Central TV Department 11 where the crosstalk competition was held and caused a big mess of things. The Central TV staff should understand that matter the most, so why would they invite him to join them this time? Zhang Ye was desperate for a job this time and was hoping that a good television station would look for him to join them, but out of all the satellite channel television stations that he had considered as a possibility, it was the one he didn't that came to look for him. The thought and idea of it never once crossed his mind as he had already identified it an impossible situation early on. However, no one could predict the unpredictable, and with most matters being so uncertain, the television station that Zhang Ye had not expected to make the move for him turned out to be the one that was offering him the olive branch now!

When Jiang Yuan heard this, he laughed a little and answered, "I've heard about the crosstalk competition at Department 11 before, but I'm not too sure of the details as Department 1 is independent of Department 11. We do not share the same team, and even our office locations are different, so we basically do not have any direct contact with them. As a result, how they view you is totally not of any concern to us at Department 1. That is the first point. Second, the reason we want to invite you to join us is not because of anything other than that you're popular and capable. With those qualities, of course we would like to bring you into our ranks. It's really that simple, though honestly, your promotion

into the B-list Celebrity Rankings and the Do You Remember program that you sold to Beijing Television were the key reasons for it. We are confident of your program planning abilities.”

Zhang Ye gave a noncommittal nod at that.

Jiang Yuan said to him, “I don’t know whether there are other satellite channels in contact with you at the moment, but if there are, then I urge you to seriously consider Central TV. Everyone who can see will know that satellite channels are definitely the best out there, especially on the forefront of variety and entertainment programs. The viewership ratings are all considerably very high, and if you just compare based on these ratings alone, then the ones who lead these statistics are all the satellite channels. But as that is only data on the superficial level. You should know this as an industry insider as well. Even if we do not look at the viewership ratings of those variety programs, if we judged them based on their influence and comprehensive strengths of one channel per television station, then our Central TV Department 1 is clearly the leader in our domestic market. That is without a question.”

Zhang Ye did not doubt this. He too knew that it was true.

Central TV Department 1 had a monopoly of the viewership ratings just with News Simulcast alone. Its viewer rating was not something that could simply be described with a zero point rating. When it got a high enough viewership rating, it could even soar into a 10 point rating or more. Even if the viewership ratings of some of the satellite channels’ programs were added up together, they still couldn’t outperform the ratings of News Simulcast. As all

the other satellite channels were required to broadcast News Simulcast as well, the program would be shown with the logo of Central TV Department 1 in the top right corner. From a certain perspective, Central TV Department 1 was just like an unresolved BUG living on in the system of all the other satellite channels. It even had ownership over the terrifying program that had the craziest viewership ratings, the Central TV Spring Festival Gala, which could easily hit crazy viewership ratings of over 20-30%!

And then, Central TV Department 1 also had the most outstanding and one of the top-ranked interview programs in the industry, together with the most excellent team, resources, and the widest area coverage reaching to faraway places in the remote mountains that even Beijing Television or Hunan Television could not cover. As long as there was some sort of television signal, even if there were very few channels or a place with only one television set, the channel that would reach such places could only be Central TV Department 1! This was the effect of an overwhelming and superior policy making from the government, something that all the other satellite channels would never be able to compete on in their lifetimes!

Yes.

Even though Central TV had been going downhill in the past two years as it gradually lost some of the interest of viewers.

But the big brother would always be the big brother, it was something that no one could change, even after a hundred years. Why? There was no why, it was just so because its name was Central TV Department 1!

Jiang Yuan said, “Central TV is the largest platform in the industry and also your best choice. I believe you know that without needing me to explain further. Recently, in the past few years, Central TV Department 1’s market share in the area of variety programs has been on a decline. The response to the programs has been tepid, so we would like for you to join us to help us create a program on Central TV that would recover its lost ground from the past few years. The program that you casually created for Beijing Television without much of your handling has already reached a viewership rating between 0.7% and 0.8%. Our team believes that if we give you a bigger platform to showcase your works on, then your new program will be sure to get a better reputation than Do You Remember which is already very well received by the audiences.”

When Zhang Ye finished listening to him, he said, “Can I ask about something else? Did you all look for me to only handle the program planning?”

“Of course not.” Jiang Yuan gave a wave of his hands at that and continued, “Although we have a lot of talented and elite hosts in Central TV, for example, the Spring Festival Gala hosts, every one of them are considered to be the top in the industry. Some are less popular than you while there are also others who are more well-known than you, but our Central TV hosts are generally more inclined towards galas, news, or interview programs, meaning that their style of hosting is more serious and formal. So if we wanted them to host in a funny and entertaining manner, it would not be done perfect or well at all. The audience’s image of them has already been fixed, so not many of them can cross over to this style of hosting. But you’re different. You can handle serious programs like Lecture Room or funny programs like Zhang Ye’s Talk Show.

This is your ability that we identified as what we liked. And you don't have any shortcomings when it comes to the switching of hosting styles either. That's why we not only wish for you to handle planning for a new program, but we would also like you to be the host or a guest celebrity on it."

Zhang Ye was actually already quite moved by the offer.

It wasn't anything that was explainable, but just based on the name of the satellite channel itself. "Central TV Department 1" was basically just too attractive!

Jiang Yuan continued, "Central TV Department 1 will soon have a program slot free for broadcast every Thursday at 9 PM."

"Thursdays?" Zhang Ye repeated the key word.

Jiang Yuan said, "Perhaps Thursday can no longer be considered a primetime slot in the traditional sense, but the Thursday evening variety slot still has a very large market and the audience base is still there."

Zhang Ye understood this. Central TV was just like a large ship with treasures, but that would naturally mean that they would not give a newcomer like Zhang Ye a share of it without seeing his performance. It was unlikely that they would give the Friday and weekend time-slots to him as that would be too much of a risk. However, a Thursday evening slot was still considerably good. After all, this was not some small-time television station but Central TV they were talking about. A Thursday evening slot

would still be better than a weekend primetime slot at Beijing Television, so Zhang Ye would surely still be very satisfied with such an offer.

Jiang Yuan looked at him and said, “I believe you can see our sincerity in this offer. If you have any thoughts or requests, you can bring them up too and we can discuss them.”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “I do actually have two requests. The first is: if I join Central TV Department 1, then for this new program, I must be the executive director and have the final say on the operations and production of the entire program.”

Jiang Yuan ruminated for a moment then said, “That would be fine, but we would want to have an executive producer from our side. Is that OK?”

“That shouldn’t be a problem.” Zhang Ye then brought up his second request, saying, “Second, I must be able to retain the copyright for the program that I create, including its name and format.”

Jiang Yuan gave him a look and asked, “Why do you want the copyright? If the program’s viewer ratings are good, then the program team would get bonus payouts too. We will put that into the contract, so how much are you looking at? Or perhaps we could bundle it together with your salary, that’s fine too.”

However, Zhang Ye said, “I don’t require a bonus payout clause. It’s just like a program production company selling their programs

to a television station. I'm sure you can understand that I want our deal to be done in this manner too, except that I will be using Central TV's resources and facilities to do the program, which is why I am willing to give this program to your station free of charge and not ask for a copyright fee. We will carry out the other aspects of the program like any other program without any additional differences in the handling, but the copyright must remain in my control. If there is a decision to do a second or third season, or if a foreign television station wants to buy its copyrights, then I will be the one to decide whether to sell or not."

Jiang Yuan was rendered quite speechless by this, so he said, "This is the first time I've heard of such a request."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "This is always how I've been doing my programs. Since I planned the program, then naturally the copyright would belong to me. This is the most important priority for me, above other things like salary, bonus, whatever. As long as those aren't too little, I'm generally fine with it. Since I retain control of the copyright, I know that I will have to take a step back on the salary."

His programs were all very precious to him, as using one now would mean one less resource for him in the future. Zhang Ye would not accept it if he worked hard on replicating a successful program from his previous world and brought it to this world, and ended up being kicked off from the television station after they had gotten the copyrights to the format and went on to do the next few seasons without him. So he knew that he had to be clear about this from the beginning like he did with his Zhang Ye's Talk Show which worked on a similar contractual agreement. This was the reason why Weiwo Online Television Station did not get another

host to continue working on the same show as that was impossible without the copyright. This was a program that only Zhang Ye could use, unless they bought it from him for a sum of money or if Zhang Ye allowed them to use it for free on the basis of friendship and past relationships.

As for Lecture Room, that was an exception since the program was first proposed by the people at BTV-Arts Channel. Zhang Ye had only used their framework and modified it a little, so there was no talk of any copyright beforehand and neither could he talk about it. That was why BTV-Arts Channel had still continued making Lecture Room even though the show was essentially already a dead one.

Jiang Yuan said, “Please give it some consideration again. Our Central TV Department 1 has never signed this sort of a contract with a host before. It’s impossible that the copyright would given to anyone other than the station itself.”

Zhang Ye said, “Since I am the program planner, executive director, and host, this program can be considered as fully my work after it is completed, and so, the copyright should rightfully belong to me. Therefore, it’s also impossible that I would give the ownership of the copyright to anyone else.”

Jiang Yuan frowned and said, “But the production team is made up entirely of our staff, and besides the marketing and broadcasting fees also contribute to a part of the costs...”

“Which is why I am providing the program for free, without charging anything for the production and planning fees,” Zhang

Ye stated.

On this issue, the two of them had a disagreement. Jiang Yuan wanted to have a one time settlement with Zhang Ye on the program planning fees, but Zhang Ye did not want it except to retain his copyrights for the program.

Then, Jiang Yuan stood up and suggested, “How about this? Let me call my management first, since this is the first time something like this has been brought up. I’m unable to make a decision regarding this by myself.”

“Sure.” Zhang Ye nodded.

Jiang Yuan walked out of the coffee house.

Five minutes passed.

Ten minutes passed.

Finally, Jiang Yuan returned, sat down, and took a sip of coffee before saying, “The management has agreed, but have some requests too. The copyright can be yours, but any profits and generated benefits that the program makes during its course at Central TV—such as advertising fees, among others—will be retained by Central TV and not paid out to you. Since we will be using our resources, facilities, and funds to promote the show, we will surely need to get some form of compensation. This would include any types of benefits that occur as a result from its run on

Central TV.”

Zhang Ye considered for a moment and then raised up his head to say, “That will be fine!”

Jiang Yuan also revealed a smile as he stood up, putting his hand out. “So we have a deal then?”

“Yes! It’s a deal!” Zhang Ye also put out his and shook his hand.

Jiang Yuan said, “Welcome aboard Central TV Department 1! We’ll all be looking forward to your contributions!”

Same day.

Central TV had quickly written up the contract.

This contract could be considered one of the most complicated ones that Central TV Department 1 had with a host before, and also one of the lesser-seen types in the industry. Within, it not only included the terms for a one year duration, planning and production responsibilities, it also included a list of the copyright and restrictions outside of the copyright, etc!

It was not that Zhang Ye wanted to be arrogant.

But it was better to be clear now than having disagreements later.

After all, Zhang Ye had been through quite a lot of troublesome situations in the past, so he felt that it was better to be blunt upfront to prevent unnecessary issues in the future.

After Zhang Ye went through the contract several times to check for any discrepancies, he finally put pen to paper and signed it!

—At the moment of signing, Zhang Ye had now officially joined Central TV Department 1!

Chapter 629 – Return Of The Jinx!

Later that afternoon.

Zhang Ye was waiting at Nanxinhua Avenue for Chenchen to out of school.

On the internet, a picture of Zhang Ye and Jiang Yuan—taken in the morning at the coffee house where the two of them had their meeting and were seen shaking hands—was leaked. Almost immediately, it caught people’s attention.

Several social media news blogs started to report about it as others picked up the news and reported a constant stream of updates.

“Secret meeting between Central TV Department 1’s Deputy Director and Zhang Ye?”

“Zhang Ye to join Central TV?”

“Shocking! Central TV Department 1’s ruthless move: joining hands with Zhang Ye!”

“Central TV’s ‘big move’. Is Zhang Ye going to join?”

Central TV, being the big brother of all domestic television stations, operated in a way that was traditional in style.

Zhang Ye was an oddity of the entertainment industry whose style did not abide by the rules.

This cooperation between the two who vastly differed in styles, akin to heaven and earth, had obviously left many citizens unable to imagine it, so when the photo and speculation of rumors came out, it immediately caught countless people by surprise.

“It can’t be?”

“They can still work together in that kind of situation?”

“Didn’t Zhang Ye offend Central TV Department 11 in the past? After the recent annual crosstalk competition was wrecked by Zhang Ye and Yao Jiancai, I heard that many of the major satellite channels already blacklisted Zhang Ye from the industry and labeled him a ‘trouble-making master.’ He can accomplish many things and exceed expectations but at the same time also create trouble that is too much to handle!”

“Central TV Department 1 is not the same as Department 11.”

“I’m dumbfounded.”

“That can’t be true, right?”

“The picture doesn’t look like it’s been photoshopped!”

“Is Central TV really so gutsy? They dare to use Zhang Ye?”

“I feel it’s very good! Central TV has made an extremely wise move!”

“Likewise, I also think that way. Although Zhang Ye’s reputation isn’t too good within the industry, he is really capable and has real abilities too. Central TV’s variety programs have gradually grown worse beginning more than ten years ago just because they were too old-fashioned and refused to develop with the times like some other satellite channels. They even refused to follow those satellite channels that bought program copyrights from overseas at high prices to refresh the market. That is why they’re getting increasingly out of touch with the market trends and losing their viewers. If Zhang Ye really joins Central TV Department 1, it will surely be a breath of fresh air. And he can bring an outstanding program to them. At the very least, it should be similar to Do You Remember, right? As long as it can get a nationwide viewership ratings of about 1%, or maybe even less than that, maybe around 0.9%, Central TV Department 1 would surely be satisfied. How many variety programs these days can even exceed 1% viewer ratings? The market share is shrinking with all the television stations pitted against each other. The viewership share in the modern context is no longer as glorious as a decade ago.”

“Waiting for Zhang Ye’s joining!”

“I think Teacher Zhang doesn’t have a job currently, right? For him, there’s should be no better choice than Central TV Department 1. There’s no other platform bigger than this!”

“The main issue now is whether this news is real or fake!”

Rumors were flying everywhere, as many people and industry insiders paid close attention to this matter. Zhang Ye was no longer the nameless rookie without any experience. He was now a B-list celebrity and someone who had the ability to affect the pattern of a television station's viewership ratings. His job movements were surely being looked at closely by countless pairs of eyes now, and even more so now that there was a rumor of him joining Central TV Department 1 where the quality of the hosts was the highest in the industry.

The alarm bell for the end of classes had still not yet rung.

But Zhang Ye's cell phone was already ringing in the car.

It was Zhang Ye's old colleague from Beijing Radio Station and the current Central Radio Station's DJ, Tian Bin. He was the first person to call him: “Zhang Ye, what's your current situation?”

Zhang Ye laughed and said: “Old Tian.”

Tian Bin exclaimed: “Is the news that's being spread online real? Did Deputy Director Jiang go to look for you?”

As there was nothing to keep under wraps, Zhang Ye

acknowledged: “Yeah, he came to find me this morning. I’ve already signed the contract too, so I’ll be starting work formally tomorrow.”

Tian Bin said: “So it’s true?”

Zhang Ye said: “Yeah.”

Tian Bin said: “Whoa, I’ll have to congratulate you then.”

Zhang Ye replied: “From tomorrow onwards, we will be colleagues again.”

Tian Bin said: “Come on, I’m just a host at the radio station. You’re the host of Central TV, and even a host at Central TV Department 1. So how can we even be considered colleagues? At most we can say that we work for the same corporation. Heh, seems like you have gotten some good success in this past half a year. You’re getting more and more popular. I’m really happy for you.”

Zhang Ye gratefully said: “All thanks to you, Old Tian. If not for the fact that we kept getting into arguments at Beijing Radio Station, I’d probably not have resigned yet and still be struggling at the radio station.”

Tian Bin laughed: “Don’t mention those trivial matters of the past. If we did not get into arguments like we did, we would not have this kind of a relationship now. This is called ‘from an

exchange of blows friendship grows.'”

Zhang Ye exclaimed and said sarcastically: “It’s not considered from an exchange of blows friendship grows because you’re the one who’s always taking the beating. When did you ever beat me in an argument?”

Hearing those words, Tian Bin nearly vomited blood. He said: “How have I never beat you? I can’t pretend that I didn’t hear your words. Since you brought it up, we must talk about this thoroughly!”

“Hahaha.”

The two of them bantered for a while more before finally hanging up.

After that, his mom called next.

His mother said: “Son, are you joining Central TV Department 1?”

Zhang Ye acknowledged: “I’ve just signed the contract and was about to inform you and Dad about it.”

“Good! Good! Good!” His mother exclaimed consecutively three times. “Like I said, there are surely people who know what’s good for them! Look at this, look at this, Central TV Department 1 has even come looking for my son now! It’s the biggest TV channel in

the country! Alright, you go and do your own things, I won't disturb you. I'll quickly give your Dad a call to give him something to cheer about!"

The moment that call disconnected, the third call came.

This time it was Yao Jiancai: "You're going to Central TV?"

Zhang Ye said: "You know about it too?"

"I've just heard some news about it, have you signed the contract yet?" Yao Jiancai asked.

Zhang Ye said: "I did."

Yao Jiancai said: "What are the terms?"

Zhang Ye said: "Just the usual conditions but the contract is rather short. It's only for a year."

Yao Jiancai said: "That's already very good. I was wondering why you didn't choose to join Beijing Television. So it turned out that you've already found a better place. Beijing Television really does not compare with Central TV in any way."

Zhang Ye said: "I didn't have an offer before that. It was only today that someone from Central TV approached me. Since I felt that the platform wasn't too bad and they were also willing to give

me quite a good extent of authority, I accepted it.”

Yao Jiancai said: “The platform isn’t too bad? What? It’s better than not bad!”

Zhang Ye: “Haha, it’s passable.”

After hanging up from Old Yao’s call, Zhang Ye thought for a while and simply decided to call up some of his close friends to inform them about this. For example, Dong Shanshan, Hu Fei, not to mention Wu Zeqing as well. Now that he had joined Central TV, he was considered to be back in Old Wu’s territory as Central TV’s direct higher authority was the SARFT. Heh, strictly speaking, as long as Zhang Ye was in the entertainment industry, then he would be under the overseeing authority of SARFT’s Deputy Chief, Old Wu. Because the SARFT basically encompassed all areas of the entertainment industry!

A bunch of phone calls were made and time passed very quickly.

The alarm bells for the end of classes rang out from the school. Shortly after, the main gates of No. 2 Experimental Primary School opened and the children gradually walked out as the parents piled forward to receive their children.

There were too many people and Zhang Ye certainly did not go forward immediately. He only wore his sunglasses and got out from the car, waiting by the side of the road. Suddenly, he saw

Chenchen's figure and motioned for her to come over. He opened the door on the other side of the car. When the little kid came over, he lifted her onto the passenger seat, then said, "Fasten your seatbelt."

Chenchen fastened her seat belt.

Zhang Ye walked back to his side of the car and drove away. While driving, he said, "How was your performance today? Did you get criticized by the teachers?"

Chenchen said with a straight face, "No."

"Hmm, then your performance wasn't too bad." It wasn't known what metric Zhang Ye was measuring this by.

Chenchen: "..."

Zhang Ye recalled something and said, "By the way, I'm starting work at Central TV tomorrow. There's no school for you tomorrow, right? Don't you go running around by yourself at home."

Chenchen said nothing.

Zhang Ye looked at her and asked, "Are you going to be fine by yourself?"

Chenchen said, "Cook for me."

"I still have to go to work. Don't you already know how to cook?" Zhang Ye said.

Chenchen said, "My aunt told you to take care of me, so you have to cook for me, Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ye blinked and said, "Why don't I order delivery for you instead? You can open the door when the delivery person comes....That won't do, it's not safe for you as a child. Then I'll get a neighbor to take care of the meals for you? You can go to the house across the way, Sister Sun's place, tomorrow afternoon to eat? It will be fine since she is also renting your aunt's place. If not, I'll get my parents take care of you for a few days?"

Chenchen made a sullen face and said nothing.

Zhang Ye knew this little kid was getting angry at him, so he said, "Must I be always be by your side?"

Chenchen said, "Yes."

"Hai, let's see how it goes tomorrow." Zhang Ye was also feeling very helpless.

Chenchen suddenly said, "Zhang Ye, I will go to work with you."

Zhang Ye turned the steering wheel as the car swung greatly to one side, “Ah? I have to bring a child with me to work on my first day at Central TV? Won’t the people there surely be gossiping about this then? No, no, that won’t do.”

Chenchen immediately said, “Then you will stay at home to accompany me.”

“But I have to work.” Zhang Ye stared at her.

Chenchen replied, “Then you will bring me along to work.”

Zhang Ye didn’t know how to react and said, “Good lord, you’re totally putting the blame on me now. Alright, I’ll consider it when I get back home and we’ll talk about it tomorrow.”

He drove them both home.

After entering the house, Zhang Ye carried Chenchen and gave her soap to wash her hands. After that, he made a call for delivery to be delivered. When Chenchen said that her school bag was dirtied today, Zhang Ye unwillingly took it into the bathroom to clean it for her—he was just like a full time nanny now.

At night.

Central TV’s official website has officially released the good news

confirming that the famous host, Zhang Ye, had joined Central TV Department 1. Central TV Department 1's new program would be planned by Zhang Ye and was in the preparation and production stages, ready to take over Thursday's 9 PM slot soon!

The moment this news was released, it caused an uproar everywhere!

“So it's true!”

“Holy shit!”

“This really isn't a rumor?”

“Central TV has really invited Teacher Zhang Ye to join them?”

“Central TV takes a traditional position while Zhang Ye has always had a different way of thinking compared to normal people. Can he display his abilities over there? Or will he not be accustomed to the new place?”

“Chen Ye is also a pillar of Central TV Department 1. Are they going to come face to face with each other soon? They're going to have a real competition with their viewership ratings?”

“That is Chen Ye's territory. With Teacher Zhang still a newcomer to the station, his program's viewer rating will surely not be able to outperform Chen Ye's. Besides, Zhang Ye only has the Thursday evening slot and not some primetime slot. It will

sure be incomparable to Chen Ye who is a senior at Central TV. Chen Ye has everything laid out for him already and has the advantage between the two of them.”

“That may not be the case.”

“Right, this is Zhang Ye we’re talking about and that name of his already represents miracles!”

“Really looking forward to Teacher Zhang Ye’s new program! You’re finally making a comeback! You’ve made us fans wait for such a long time!”

“Congratulations to Teacher Zhang for advancing to Central TV!”

“Tossing flowers! It’s the return of the jinx!”

“I’ve got a strong feeling that something interesting will happen soon!”

“Hahaha, there will always be drama wherever Teacher Zhang goes!”

“Let’s see how big a commotion Zhang Ye will cause at Central TV Department 1 this time!”

Chapter 630 – Executive Director Zhang Ye!

Saturday.

At Central TV Tower.

As this place was next to Yuyuantan Park—which was also known as Bayi Lake—the air here was noticeably much cooler and refreshing than other places. When the breeze was blowing, it felt most relaxing. Many tourists were buying tickets from the main entrance to go into the park. Some brought their children, some were here as a couple, and there was also many children from primary and secondary schools here for their field trips. The park was packed with people. The television station tower here was also a popular tourist spot in Beijing as well as allowing tourists to tour it. But of course, the Central TV office area where the staff worked at and the visitors' area did not overlap. The entrances for these places were also different, such as the places where programs were recorded and the smaller recording studios which were located underground beside the tower area and were not open to public.

In the tower.

A staff-only elevator was slowly ascending. Because the tower was constructed very early on and was considered a high-rise, the elevator's speed was also comparatively slower. In Beijing slang, this elevator was “meatier” than the common and smaller Beijing district buildings' elevators.

There were only two people in the elevator, a child and an adult.

Zhang Ye repeatedly badgered and asked, “Do you remember what I told you? Repeat it again.”

Chenchen said impatiently, “No running around, no nonsense, listen to you, don’t give you trouble, and greet others when I see them.”

Zhang Ye nodded at this and said, “Today is Uncle’s first day at work, be sure to earn some brownie points for me. Don’t make me lose face. If you do well today, then Sunday tomorrow I can still bring you to work. We can see the whole of the city of Beijing and even further from the observation deck upstairs. But if you’re not obedient and cause trouble for me, I will leave you at home alone tomorrow!”

Chenchen curled her lips and said, “I know. Zhang Ye, you nag even more than my aunt.”

If Zhang Ye wasn’t worried about leaving Chenchen alone at home, he would never have brought her to the workplace for sure!

“Alright, we’ve reached our floor,” Zhang Ye said as he put out his hand in front of Chenchen.

Chenchen looked at his hand and then put her little hand in his.

When the elevator door opened, Zhang Ye pulled Chenchen by the hand and walked out. He proceeded to the HR Department to

handle the joining formalities and saw Central TV Department 1's Deputy Director Jiang Yuan already waiting there for him.

Zhang Ye smiled and greeted, "Director Jiang."

Jiang Yuan nodded and said, "You're here?"

A few people working at the HR Department looked toward him. So this was the legendary Zhang Ye? Indeed, he was just like he looked on TV, really ordinary after all. If this person was seen on the streets, no one would have batted an eyelid at him, nor would anyone think that this person would have the potential to become a celebrity. However, that couldn't be further from the truth, as this person standing before them right now was not just a celebrity, he was a B-list celebrity of the entertainment circle who was ranked a little higher than one of the pillars of Central TV, Chen Ye. This was exactly what people meant by not judging a book by its cover.

Eh?

Why is there a child beside?

A few of the HR Department staff members were a bit taken aback when they saw Zhang Ye holding the hand of a little girl. Whoa, whose child is that, why is she so pretty?

Jiang Yuan also noticed her and asked, "This is?"

Chenchen automatically moved her mouth and greeted, “Uncle.” She seemed to have taken Zhang Ye’s instruction to heart.

Zhang Ye was a little embarrassed. He explained, “So, one of my relatives went out of town to settle some business and the little girl had no one to take care of her, so the task fell to my hands. As the child is still young, I am quite worried about leaving her at home alone.”

Jiang Yuan acknowledged and said, “Oh, alright then.”

The HR Department staff were all a little bemused by this. Bringing a child to work on your very first day? This was truly something they’d never seen before! If it wasn’t a case of the talented being bolder, then this was surely something that only Zhang Ye, a wonder of the entertainment industry, would dare do! He was truly worthy of the reputation for taking the path off the beaten track!

Very quickly, the formalities were completed.

Jiang Yuan called for Zhang Ye to go to his office and then asked him to have a seat. He said, “Teacher Zhang, the paperwork is all completed. As of today, you’re a part of Central TV Department 1. So let’s skip the formalities and I’ll talk about the new program first for you to have a little reference.”

Zhang Ye told Chenchen to go sit outside on the guest sofa. Then he said, “Alright, please speak.”

Jiang Yuan said, “I’ve already told you about taking over the current program slot, so you have a general idea of that already. What we need to discuss now are the details of the new program proposal. As you know, it’s not easy to make something new in the variety program market now as all of the other satellite channels are also doing the same thing and churning out similar types of programs without any creativity. Even though there are several standouts, those are all programs that have been adapted from foreign programs brought in by the other satellite channels, especially the variety programs from Korea. But as Central TV, we cannot do that, as our station’s theme comes from here, after all. There are some political factors as well. Generally, we are more restricted as we cannot buy the copyright of good foreign variety programs, but we are still looking for something innovative, not blind innovation or innovation for the sake of innovation, but innovation that fits the current market trends and practices.”

Zhang Ye said, “I understand.”

Jiang Yuan acknowledged that and said, “Among the number of innovative program producers in the country now, you are one of the better ones. In this matter, you’re the professional and know better than me, so I will not go over the technicalities, but I will touch on our requirements. The station does not have any restrictions on the program, whether it is a traditional style variety program or reality television program or talent show program. We’re fine with any of that. As long as the program is something new and has a market, we will do it!”

Zhang Ye asked, “How about the funding?”

Jiang Yuan said, “Let me first hear how much you need.”

Zhang Ye spoke honestly, “I want however much you can give. But, to be honest, I will not think it is too much no matter how much you are going to approve, because in making a good program good funding is a must.”

“The station does not have a lack of funds, but surely we won’t be able to give all that funding to you, am I right? There must be a limit.” Jiang Yuan said, “Let’s talk about the funding at a later time. I need to see your program proposal before I can decide. If it really is a good program, then it will definitely get the funding it deserves. Even if it exceeds our budget, I don’t have a problem, as long as it doesn’t exceed it by too much. The station urgently needs to claw its lost market share back and have a good program that can compete with the other satellite channels. It’s easy to talk things over; anything can be negotiated.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “With your promise, I feel reassured now.”

Jiang Yuan also laughed, “I have to see your program proposal to feel reassured as well.”

“Sure. I’ll get it done before leaving work today,” Zhang Ye bragged.

Jiang Yuan was taken aback at this, “So quickly? You don’t need to rush as there’s still some time before you take over the broadcast slot. Just give the proposal to me within the next few

days and it should be fine. Haste makes waste. What we want is still the quality of the program.”

Zhang Ye said, “Don’t worry, I understand.”

Hearing that, Jiang Yuan didn’t say anything further, “Alright, then I’ll await your project proposal. The new program’s team has already been set up. They’re all Central TV Department 1’s elites and there’s nothing to complain about in regards to their working capabilities. Well then, I still have a meeting later, so I won’t join you there. Let me hook you up with one of the team’s personnel, Fu Sihong. Old Fu is a veteran of our Central TV station and is very dependable. As your new program’s executive producer, he is definitely the most suitable man for the job. When you meet him, take the chance to get to know him and then have a discussion with him regarding the new program.”

After that, he made a call.

Soon after, a slightly plump middle-aged man knocked on the office door and came inside.

Jiang Yuan introduced the both of them, saying, “Old Fu, this is Zhang Ye.”

Fu Sihong looked at him and reached out his hand, saying, “Hello, Teacher Zhang.”

Zhang Ye shook his hand and said, “Hello, just call me Little

Zhang.”

Jiang Yuan needed to go as he had work to take care of, so Fu Sihong and Zhang Ye also left the office together. He heard Fu Sihong tell him, “Let’s first go to the program team’s office to have a look. I will introduce the team members to you.”

“Sure.” Zhang Ye turned around and called for Chenchen, “Let’s go.”

Chenchen was still leaning on the glass window and looking down at the outside, as though she did not hear a thing.

Zhang Ye called out again, “Chenchen, hurry up. We’re leaving.”

Chenchen acknowledged him and followed him unwillingly.

They took the elevator down.

Downstairs, at the office area.

When Fu Sihong pushed opened a door that was emblazoned with the words “Central 1 Thursday 9 PM Slot (Program To Be Confirmed)”, a bright light greeted them immediately as a warm ray of sun shone on them through a row of windows inside the office. The entirety of Beijing could be seen from here as they stood at a high place looking out, with a view that would no doubt infuse

people with excitement. The office area was not small either, with just the tables alone numbering around 50 to 60. There were also quite a few standalone rooms which were clearly prepared for the program team's leaders. Each of these rooms were labeled with titles such as executive producer, executive director, host, etc. There was even a lounge, a small meeting room, as well as a nursing room (breastfeeding room).

It was completely kitted out!

There no need to scrutinize the environment and facilities!

There were not many people in the office area, just seven or eight people. Some of them were still busy packing and arranging things at their desks, clearly showing that it was their first day operating from this office as well.

“Producer Fu.”

“Brother Fu.”

“Teacher Zhang.”

“Teacher Zhang Ye.”

“Director Zhang.”

Everyone started greeting them, addressing them by all kinds of

titles.

Fu Sihong was not young, probably in his forties or fifties. He looked very calm and did not wear much of a smile either. He said, “This is Zhang Ye, but I don’t think I really need to do any introductions about him here.” Then he started to introduce the staff to Zhang Ye.

“This is Zhang Zuo, an assistant director.” —A thin man around thirty years of age.

“This is Ha Qiqi, also an assistant director.” —A woman in her thirties.

“This is Wu Yi, the technical director.” —He was a bespectacled man.

“This is...”

One by one, he made the introductions to Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye shook hands with them one by one as well, smiling and saying a few words to them.

In a big unit, at a big television station, the roles and responsibilities were more clearly defined. There were also more rules and regulations here, unlike when Zhang Ye was working at BTV-Arts Channel or the online television station. Overall, as the program team was just formed and meeting for the first time,

although the roles of the team had not been fully filled yet and would have to wait until the program details were solidified, the main leadership roles of the program team had already been set. Fu Sihong was the executive producer appointed by Central TV Department 1 and would oversee the general administration of the team. Zhang Ye was the second-in-command as the executive director and would oversee the program planning, production, and other technical works.

Chapter 631 – The Troublesome Little Chencheng!

After the introductions.

There were two staff members that even Producer Fu Sihong did not know too well, probably because they were only transferred here today as well, and so they introduced themselves when it came to their turn.

Seeing all the new colleagues, looking at the view outside the windows and the well-equipped office, Zhang Ye was feeling extremely satisfied with everything. Central TV Department 1 was just as its name suggested. The way they spent their finances was shown clearly by the resources littering the office and work area. The workplace's environment could be said to be the best in the industry and also the largest. Standing here, Zhang Ye could not find any faults at all. Other than satisfied, there was still satisfaction! Compared to this place, his previous departments at his old workplaces were basically just kennels!

Fu Sihong said, "Teacher Zhang, why don't you familiarize yourself with the team first, I will go out to bring a few more people over. Some of them are still not here yet."

Zhang Ye turned around and said, "Sure, please do what you need to."

Fu Sihong turned around to leave the office.

When he left, several of the team also livened up. From that, it seemed that Fu Sihong wasn't really a person anyone could easily talk to.

Assistant Director Zhang Zuo said, "Teacher Zhang, I've always liked your programs. When I heard from the leader yesterday that you would be doing the program planning for our new Thursday evening program, I was the first one to register to transfer over."

Assistant Director Ha Qiqi also said cheerfully, "If we're talking about who was the first one to be confirmed for this new program team, then it has to be me. Even before the program team had been formed, my name was already on the list, but it was just a normal transfer for me as my previous program has already stopped airing. I really hadn't expected that Teacher Zhang would join us, but as long as we follow Teacher Zhang's command, then nothing will go wrong for sure. Didn't all of Teacher Zhang's past program productions all get popular wherever he went?"

Technical Director Wu Yi nodded and said, "I think we won't even need to use our brains to work anymore. As long as we follow Teacher Zhang's commands, everything should go smoothly and the ratings will surely be great!"

As they were all meeting for just the first time, they did not really know what to say, nor did they know how Zhang Ye was like as a person. To be on the safe side, they simply said some words that would suck up to Zhang Ye and that would ensure nothing was said wrong.

Zhang Ye was enjoying it too. Well said, really well said.

Chenchen glanced at them, then glanced at Zhang Ye and smirked a little. “Hur hur.”

Zhang Ye: “...”

Everyone: “...”

Ha Qiqi asked, “Who might this beautiful little girl be?”

Zhang Ye said, “She’s my relative. I will be taking care of her for a few days as there’s no one available to look after her.”

Ha Qiqi smiled and squatted down, saying, “This little one is really too cute. I’ve never seen such a beautiful child before.” These words of hers sounded more sincere compared to earlier.

“Chenchen, greet her,” Zhang Ye said.

Chenchen listlessly greeted her, “Auntie.”

Ha Qiqi said, “What a good girl!”

Zhang Ye said helplessly, “What’s so good about her? This kid is always so troublesome.”

Being criticized in front of so many people, Chenchen did not like it, so she said, “Zhang Ye, you’re the one who’s troublesome. There are always news reports of you ‘fighting’ with others.”

Pfft!

When Ha Qiqi heard that, she nearly burst out laughing!

The others were also trying to hold in their laughter, not daring to laugh at all. The kid was indeed right. When it came to being troublesome? Who could be more troublesome than the famous face-smacking Zhang of the entertainment circle!

Zhang Ye was very embarrassed by this. Damned kid, why was she so disobedient. It’s only my first day at work and you’re already dragging me down? He snapped at her, “Shoo, shoo. Go and play somewhere by yourself.”

Chenchen who was waiting exactly for this opportunity immediately slipped away to the row of windows in the office and stuck her neck out to look down. When she got tired of standing, she found a chair for herself and sat there beside the windows.

Zhang Ye told his colleagues, “This kid is a little different from other children. Don’t judge her by seven or eight year old age. She’s really more like a little adult and doesn’t like to talk much or play. I don’t even understand what she’s thinking of all day. In any case, I will be bringing her around for these two days, so if she offends you guys in any way, please accept my apologies in advance. Don’t take it up with her, and if possible, could everyone

also keep an eye on her and keep her from running around?”

A young male staff member quickly said, “Teacher Zhang, look at you. Why do you need to be so polite with us? Children are all like this. It’s normal.”

Wu Yi said, “Yes, it will be fine.”

Ha Qiqi, seemingly going with the flow, said, “When you’re not around, I’ll help you look after the child. Leave it all to me.”

Zhang Ye said, “Is that really alright, Sister Qi?”

Ha Qiqi happily said, “Since you’re already addressing me as Sister Qi, even if it’s not OK, it has now become OK.” With just a few exchange of words, she had already observed Zhang Ye as someone easy to get along with. Indeed, Zhang Ye did not have any airs about him and was very polite when speaking. As a result, Ha Qiqi also opened up a lot more and said, “Don’t worry, I’ll definitely take good care of her.”

Zhang Ye quickly said, “Then I give you my thanks.” He knew that he couldn’t possibly keep an eye on Chenchen all day. With someone like Ha Qiqi helping him, Zhang Ye was also less worried now.

For the next half hour, Zhang Ye continued conversing with his colleagues, as other than chatting, there was no work to do at the moment. They talked about everything under the sky, but the

conversation still mainly revolved around Zhang Ye. For example, they asked him for the meanings behind certain poems, the truth behind the Peking University incident, or the reason why he beat up Lee Anson after the Spring Festival Gala this year. After all, many of them had only known about Zhang Ye from the news and media. They didn't know the details or the insider's point of view. Since they did not know—or to better phrase it, did not know the full story—they were naturally more curious as well. Seeing how Zhang Ye was such a easy person to talk to, they started asking one by one, not knowing that Zhang Ye would really answer them and do a tell-all.

With these conversations, their relationships were also pulled closer together. Not only did Zhang Ye's relationship with them get closer, even the relationship between themselves got better. As this group of people were all from different departments, even if they had seen each other before in the past, today was their first day as a new unit, so they surely had to slowly build up their trust and relationships with each other. A good conversation was often one of the best ways to pull people closer together.

Eventually, they only stopped talking when Fu Sihong arrived back at the office with two new colleagues. They got to know these two newcomers a little before getting ready to unpack and arrange their things again. Things like the Wi-Fi password and intranet login details all needed to be reconfigured again, and there were still many other things that they had to do.

Zhang Ye called out to Chenchen again, "Come here."

Chenchen did not go over. She said, "But I'm looking at the

buildings.”

Zhang Ye said, “Then don’t you run around carelessly in the office. When you get bored, come to my office and look for me. Right, remember to do your homework, didn’t your teacher give you some for the weekend? Where did you put your bag?”

Chenchen patted on the bag she had put on the windowsill. “I know.”

Ha Qiqi laughed and said, “Teacher Zhang, leave it to me, don’t bother yourself anymore.”

“Sure, then I’ll leave it to you.” Zhang Ye then went into his new office.

Once he entered the room, Zhang Ye immediately liked the place. There was a genuine leather sofa set, a genuine leather swivel chair, as well as an abstract piece of art hanging on the wall that he did not understand. He took a seat behind the large office desk and felt really comfortable there. In the past, Zhang Ye had worked at quite a number of places, but strictly speaking, he had never before had a standalone office for himself. This was a first for him. As Zhang Ye climbed up the social ladder, his status and recognizability also increased. This fellow’s situation was becoming better and better!

Not bad!

Not bad at all!

He switched on his computer and messed around with it for a while, then looked through some books at the bookshelf as well. After trying out everything for a while, Zhang Ye calmed down and started arranging his stuff too. He took out his stationery—such as a notebook and a fountain pen, as well as some tea leaves—and placed them in a spot he could easily reach. Of other miscellaneous items, he did not bother with them as the unit would be sure to provide them.

After sitting there for a moment, Zhang Ye pushed the door open to go outside, hoping to familiarize himself with the situation around the office and the other departments. When he had just stepped out of the office, Zhang Ye saw something that left him “vomiting blood”!

He saw Chenchen holding her small bag and walking past the staff members one by one, handing out something to them.

Chenchen: “Uncle, help me with my Chinese homework.”

The young man smiled and said, “Sure, pass it to me.”

Chenchen: “Auntie, help me do my composition.”

Ha Qiqi didn’t know whether to laugh or cry but said, “Let me give it a try then.”

Chenchen: “Uncle, help me do my math homework.”

Zhang Zuo cleared his throat and nodded. “Alright, let me take a look.”

In a short moment, Chenchen had already delegated all of her homework. Finally, she even instructed, “Don’t tell Zhang Ye about this. He doesn’t let me to get other people to help me with my homework.”

Zhang Ye was furious. He shouted, “Rao Chenchen!”

Chenchen turned around and saw him, then sighed like a little adult and turned back around. She walked to the front of the aunties and uncles, very consciously taking back the workbooks one at a time from them.

Everyone was tickled by the look on Chenchen’s face.

Only Zhang Ye could not find any fun in this. He said, “You’re even commanding people to do things now!? They’re all busy and yet you want them to do your homework for you? What did I tell you before we came here?”

Chenchen did not say a word.

A female staff member said, “Teacher Zhang, it’s just a small matter.”

Ha Qiqi also said, “Yes, the child is just playing around with us.”

Many of the staff in the office were speaking up for Chenchen. It seemed that she was rather popular with the people here.

Zhang Ye said to Chenchen, “This is your last chance. If I find you doing that again, I will leave you at home alone.” Saying that, he finally stepped out of the office and went outside to take a look around.

After about 20 minutes, when Zhang Ye returned he discovered Ha Qiqi speaking to Chenchen. An empty desk that Chenchen had “occupied” was now littered with all sorts of snacks—chips, chocolate, soda, milk candy, etc. He didn’t know who gave them to her, but the kid was basically just hugging the soda bottle and drinking from it, holding the chips and munching on them. What a harvest she’d had.

Zhang Ye said, “How much do you intend to eat?”

Ha Qiqi smiled and said, “It’s given to her by our female colleagues, just let her have some if she likes it.”

“Have you thanked the sisters and aunties?” Zhang Ye looked at Chenchen and asked.

A female colleague laughed and said, “She’s already thanked us.”

Chenchen put down the cola and jumped down from the chair. She said, “Zhang Ye, I need to go to the bathroom.”

Ha Qiqi stood up and said, “It’s not so convenient for Teacher Zhang to bring you. Come with me, let auntie take you instead.”

Chenchen hesitated a little but still went over to Zhang Ye’s side. She tugged at Zhang Ye’s arm and urged him, “Zhang Ye, I need to go to the bathroom.”

“Get Auntie Qi to go with you?” Zhang Ye asked her.

Chenchen said, “You take me.”

Zhang Ye said, “You’re still shy around strangers?”

Ha Qiqi said, “Hur hur, the child is really sticking to you.”

Zhang Ye said, “She only thinks of me when there’s a problem.” He pulled Chenchen’s hand and said, “Come along, I’ve just familiarized myself around here. There’s a separate restroom over there. I will bring you this once, but you go there by yourself after that.”

Chenchen nodded.

Sigh.

Looks like the whole morning would be wasted on looking after this child!

Chapter 632 – Entirely New Program Birthed!

Afternoon.

After lunch.

The morning was spent taking the child around, unpacking personal belongings, and familiarizing himself around the place. After getting lunch at Central TV's cafeteria, he went back to the program team's new office. Today's main work was finally going to be officially started. The first round of transfers to the new staff of this program team were all finally here.

In the meeting room, more than a dozen people were seated, and fully filled the room.

Fu Sihong kicked off the meeting first and said, "From today onward, our new program team has been officially formed. Many of you were transferred here from the other departments of Central TV Department 1, while some others came here from the other channels. We also have two new members of Central TV who have many years of experience at their previous job. Some of you know each other from before while some of you are meeting for the first time, but overall, our new program team is still quite young and there is a lot to work on together to deepen your mutual understanding. I hope that—in the course of our work from now on, with the guidance of Teacher Zhang and me—everyone can get along well and work seriously so that our new program will flourish and be good."

Bba bba bba.

Everyone clapped softly.

Fu Sihong looked to his side and said, “Teacher Zhang, why don’t you say a few words as well?”

In this newly set up program team, the core leaders were in fact made up of just two people. One was Fu Sihong, the other was Zhang Ye. As for the others, like the assistant directors and assistant producers, they were not considered to be leaders in the team yet. Even though the positions were only different in that one had the word “executive” in it, the differences were as wide as the distance between the sky and the earth. Whether it be at a television station or in a film crew, an assistant director had little authority and would be managed like they were just a clerk or assistant handling administrative duties.

Zhang Ye nodded and gave his first speech as a leader. “Since I am in charge of the production, let me talk about the program. The station has given us a direction already and we are allowed to do any type of variety program without restriction. The station head has very high expectations of us and is willing to provide us with very good funding for the program too, so I would like to hear about everyone’s opinions and discuss the kind of a program we should be making.”

Zhang Zuo said, “According to the market trend, the audience still leans toward the singing shows. At the very least, if we did

that, we would not have to worry about the viewership ratings at all. It is definitely a safe choice.”

Ha Qiqi said, “But the viewership ratings won’t be high either.”

Zhang Zuo nodded and said, “That’s true. That is a difficulty facing new programs nowadays. The genres of shows that have already been acknowledged by the market and audience are all highly sought after by the various larger television stations. The competition is tough and the audience base is also scattered as a result of this. But even if we do some other type of lesser-known program, the audience would not really accept it.”

Wu Yi said, “The singing shows are really getting more and more difficult to make.”

A female staff member said, “But the program that Teacher Zhang planned, that Do You Remember, has received very favorable ratings. It has always been the first or second place program in the same time slot for nationwide viewership ratings.”

Ha Qiqi nodded and said, “I’ve watched Do You Remember before and it’s really good. It’s something innovative and has entertained the audiences to its best potential. If we could get the copyright for that program, then we could also do a similar type of show.”

Similar type?

This was obviously not what Zhang Ye was going after.

Zhang Ye said, “Is there anything else that anyone wants to bring up?”

Everyone freely spoke their minds. The overall consensus was more inclined towards a singing program. However, they were also very wary and hesitant of the potential pitfalls of such a show, so there was also quite a lot of disagreement over it. They were unable to come to a conclusion about it at this moment. Actually, what many of them had on their minds was how Central TV should have signed Zhang Ye earlier. If that were the case, then Zhang Ye would not have sold Do You Remember to Beijing Television and it would end up as a program on their own Central TV Department 1’s channel instead. However, they didn’t know that—even if Zhang Ye had joined Central TV Department 1 earlier—he would not have gone on to produce Do You Remember. But if he did, he would not have made himself the host of the show or treated it as a hit program. Because to Zhang Ye, although Do You Remember was a rather good program with rather good viewership ratings, it was still at best described as “rather good” only. What Zhang Ye was chasing after was not to be “rather good” but to be the best. He wanted to make a successful program that would break the viewership ratings, something that would be a blockbuster-type of a program. Do You Remember did not qualify as that to him.

Zhang Ye had a limited amount of energy and time. His year also consisted of 365 days like any other person, so if he wanted to replicate every idea of a program that he had in his mind into this world? That was obviously impossible. If Zhang Ye wanted to produce and host a program all by himself, he would surely use the most successful and blockbuster-type of program from his previous world and produce it for this world’s audience.

The meeting ended.

Zhang Ye and Fu Sihong were walking together, discussing the meeting and the new program. It could be determined from their conversation that Fu Sihong was also inclined to do a singing show as the market demand of variety programs in current times was quite poor, with the viewer ratings often averaging quite low. It was no longer like five to ten years ago when the genre was enjoying its peak with high viewer ratings. So if they were forced to pick the best out of whatever was given to them, they would surely end up choosing a singing show that was also the biggest slice of the pie left, followed by reality television programs, and other types.

Gathering everyone's opinions and viewpoints, Zhang Ye had formed a general idea in his mind. They all preferred a singing show? Alright, let's make one of those then!

Difficult to innovate?

This was clearly not a hurdle that would trouble Zhang Ye.

After Zhang Ye came out from Fu Sihong's office, he announced to those outside, "Who can help me with a few surveys? I would like to know about the other satellite channels' singing program's viewership ratings and market share, from their first episode to their latest one. It would be best if we could do up concise research on this. Oh, yes, I'll also need information about their celebrity guests and key contestants, or champions and runner-ups. Best

case would be video clips of them.”

Ha Qiqi was a little taken aback. She said, “You’re sure that you want to do a singing program?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Tentatively, yes.”

Ha Qiqi said, “Alright then, I’ll go and prepare the data.”

Wu Yi said, “I’ll help you, Sister Qi.”

Zhang Zuo said, “Then I’ll get the others to search for the information about the celebrity guests and competitors.”

Zhang Ye said, “Great, thanks for the trouble, please get them as soon as possible.”

This program was very important to Zhang Ye and he also placed a good deal of focus on it. He couldn’t just handle this program proposal like he did for Do You Remember. Since that was meant to be sold to others, he did not put too much attention into it and could naturally leave all the work to the people at Beijing Television Station and not do anything himself. But this new program was meant to be done by himself with him as the host, so he definitely had to make the best preparations he could. This was the debut show of Zhang Ye at Central TV Department 1, he could not afford to slack or take it too lightly. That was the reason why he wanted to gather information and news on all the other television station’s singing programs. He needed to know in detail

the overall setup of this world's singing shows so that he could make the necessary adjustments to his program proposal.

As the proverb goes, know yourself as well as you know the enemy.

In the executive director's office.

Zhang Ye came back in and saw Chenchen sitting in the genuine leather swivel chair. As she was still quite short, she had trouble holding the mouse and was awkwardly controlling and clicking it. Zhang Ye went around behind her to have a look and saw that she was playing games. It was some sort of a puzzle game, one that required the player to clear the bubbles from the game screen. Whatever it was, Zhang Ye did not really understand.

“Go away, I have work to do,” Zhang Ye said, trying to chase her off.

Chenchen did not look away from the computer screen and said, “Let me play a little while more.”

Zhang Ye rushed her and said, “Hurry up, I have serious work to do here.”

Chenchen did not want to listen and said, “Zhang Ye, I'm going to play for a bit more. I've already finished my homework.”

“Are you serious? Let me have a look.” Zhang Ye saw the workbooks beside her and picked them up, flipping through them. She had really finished them, so he said, “OK then, you did well. Alright, I’ll let you play for a while longer.” He could only go over to the guest sofa beside the door and sit there, taking out his fountain pen to work on the program proposal.

A while later.

Ha Qiqi came into the office and reported, “The data has all been gathered.”

Zhang Zuo had also finished his task and come into the the office. “The information you needed from me has also been collected.”

Zhang Ye took it from them and said, “That’s good, let me have a look.”

When Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo both noticed that Chenchen had already occupied and taken over the office desk, leaving Zhang Ye sitting in a corner. They couldn’t help but look at each other and laugh a little. From this alone, they could see that even though Zhang Ye kept complaining about Chenchen, he was actually also very generous to her.

After looking through the data and research, Zhang Ye’s heart was set. Having gotten to know this world’s singing programs better now, he knew that the singing shows’ development here was indeed quite different from his previous world’s. If he wanted to

say who was doing it better, then there was really no way to give an answer to that, since both worlds had their positives. Zhang Ye's previous world did better in that they had a better diversification of presentation and style. The same types of programs were all done differently by tweaking the sequence and formats. For this world, it stood out in terms of the audience numbers and their fervent support for singing programs. Even if there were four or five program slots a week that were packed with singing shows, no one got sick of them and continued watching. However, each program's viewer ratings were not really high and were only at around 0.5% to 0.6%. But when all the singing programs' market shares were added together, it became a frightening figure.

Overall, this world's singing programs market and audience were considered to be enormous, with many people doing such shows as well. Inadvertently, the market share was also spread that way accordingly as its viewership ratings showed. This was what led to the embarrassing situation of having such average viewership ratings now. If—which was a big if—there were an incredibly outstanding singing program that could put to shame all of the other satellite channel's singing programs, then that huge audience base would definitely come together and be reflected on this outstanding program's viewership ratings!

But was there anyone who could achieve this?

The unification of all singing programs?

—This was actually what Zhang Ye was aiming for!

If he wanted to launch a singing program in this world, but was not bold enough, then the program would definitely be smothered and killed by all the other singing shows of the other satellite channels! Besides, just because others could not achieve it did not mean he could not achieve it. This market did not lack an audience base. In fact, the audience base was very large but what it lacked was a program that would shine in the eyes of everyone watching it; while back at Zhang Ye's previous world, due to the critical tastes of the audience, there was a lack of audience base, but no shortage of wonderful programs!

If he had the program?

And there was an existence of a good audience base in this world?

Then these two worlds were surely made for each other!

And the matchmaker for the two of them was naturally going to be Zhang Ye!

His debut program on Central TV this time was going to be broadcast nationwide. It was a totally different platform compared to his previous platforms. This was Zhang Ye's important step towards the A-list celebrity rankings, so then what sort of a program should he bring out this time? What sort of a singing program would be most suitable for this situation? Not only must the show have a good reputation and viewer ratings, at the same time, it also had to showcase Zhang Ye as a host. For most talent shows like that, the role of the host was usually minimal and negligible. The main focus would usually be on the contestants and celebrity guests, so that would mean Zhang Ye's program of choice

was even more limited now.

Which should he choose?

Which was the better option?

Suddenly, Zhang Ye looked towards Chenchen and said, “Chenchen stop playing already how long has it been since you’ve started don’t overdo it Uncle still has work to do!”

Due to the Fruit of Agility’s effects, as Zhang Ye did not control it well due to a lack of concentration, the signals from his brain were fired too quickly which accelerated his speech, like a trace would be left behind. Even though he spoke extremely quickly, each of his words could be heard and were also enunciated very clearly.

Chenchen looked at him and asked, “Zhang Ye, why have you been talking so quickly for the past two days?”

When Zhang Ye heard this, he pondered for a moment and then suddenly slapped his thigh with a loud laugh!

I got it!

It’s gotta be you!

My The Voice of China!

Chapter 633 – The Speed Of Zhang Ye's Writeup Of The Program Proposal!

A classic singing program?

Must have a good reputation?

Must have a ridiculous viewer rating?

The host must not act as just a supporting role?

There was only one answer and it was probably the only program that could meet the criteria. If this was the past, Zhang Ye would seriously not dare to use this program because he was afraid that he would do it badly since he did not think he could do justice to the details in the program. To destroy such a classic program from his previous world which was so popular across the country.... No, it should be said that it was so popular around the world instead. So if it were destroyed in the hands of Zhang Ye, then he would surely have become a sinner by spoiling something so great. But now, Zhang Ye dared to do it, not because of anything except the reason of having eaten those hundred-plus Fruits of Agility he had gotten from the lottery draw.

When he received the Fruit of Agility prize from the lottery draw the first time, he felt that this item was useless to him. When he won it again in the latest lottery draw, Zhang Ye still did not make much of it until today, when he realized that it had another effect—the Fruit of Agility could affect his talking and reaction speed. As Zhang Ye had majored in broadcasting, his talking speed was not

slow to begin with. At the very least, he was still a bit faster than the average person, but that was not good enough. Compared to his previous world's host of The Voice of China, [Hua Shao](#), he was still way behind him. It wasn't even unfair to say that he was not comparable to some of those crosstalk actors who could do speed recital well. Because talking speed was more dependent on talent and genes than on training, there was nothing anyone could really do about it. If your reaction speed was already slow to start with, even if your brain fired countless of signals at once, your body would still be restricted to its reaction speed. If you wanted to increase your speed by one percent more, it was already very difficult, not to mention if you wanted to suddenly increase it by 50 to 70%! This was not something that could be trained!

Hu Qiaohua, also known as Hua Shao (Young Master Hua) or "The Tongue of China". He is known by Chinese as the fastest-speaking host in China.

But now?

Zhang Ye could do it!

His reaction speed had already increased multiple times and his talking speed was no longer the same as before, so why would he still have any doubts about it now? For him, The Voice was definitely the best option! There were no other programs which were suitable for the current situation and condition!

It's settled!

He proceeded to write the program proposal quickly. Even

without the help of the Memory Search Capsules, Zhang Ye could write the proposal in detail. He couldn't help it; this program was way too popular. Zhang Ye had even watched it many times over.

Chenchen asked, "Zhang Ye, do you need to use the computer?"

"No, no need." Zhang Ye was busily writing something.

Hearing that, Chenchen continued holding the mouse and said, "Then I will continue playing."

Zhang Ye did not forget to remind her, "Don't place your head too close to the monitor screen, and try to protect your eyesight. If in the future you become nearsighted, you will suffer."

Chenchen said, "Zhang Ye, you nag so much."

Zhang Ye grunted, "Then why are you always making people worry? I'm almost your dad at this point."

One page!

Two pages!

Three pages!

The more he wrote, the more excited he became!

He was not getting excited over the writing of the proposal, rather because of the anticipation that this extremely reputable program would soon be produced by his hands. He could not wait any longer. In the past, whether it was for Lecture Room or any inspired talk show like Tonight 80's Talk Show and Mr. Zhou Live Show, compared to the viewership ratings of The Voice, they were leagues apart. That was why Zhang Ye's expectations and drive were also very different!

Later that afternoon.

1:30 PM.

Director Jiang Yuan of Central TV Department 1 came over to inspect the progress. Actually, it couldn't be considered as inspecting the progress as the new program team had just been established, so he only came to have a look around. This program team was under Director Jiang Yuan's charge and he was very concerned about the team's transition and whether the viewership ratings of new program could achieve the desired results.

“Director Jiang.”

“Director.”

“Director Jiang.”

Everyone stopped what they were doing.

Fu Sihong also came out of his office.

Jiang Yuan smiled and said, “Everyone’s busy? Getting used to the new environment yet?”

Ha Qiqi said, “Yes, we’re getting used to it. This new office is much better than the variety channel’s office. It’s definitely much better to work with Director Jiang.” She hadn’t been working at Central TV Department 1 but with Central TV’s variety channel before being transferred over here.

Jiang Yuan shook his head and said, “You have such a glib tongue.” Then he looked around and asked, “Where’s Little Zhang?”

Zhang Zuo answered, “Teacher Zhang is in his office studying and researching the singing programs of other satellite channels.”

Jiang Yuan asked with interest, “Oh? Singing programs?”

Fu Sihong said, “We still don’t know what the final concept will be. Should I call him over?”

“There’s no need to.” Jiang Yuan stopped him and said, “Let Little Zhang continue with his studying. When he gets a good grasp of the other similar programs, he will be able to draw up a better program, so there’s no need to rush him.” Additionally, he

also reminded them, “These next few days, I hope everyone will put in more effort to help Little Zhang finalize the program proposal. Once we have the proposal and after I approve it, the funding will be released to the team. Since this program will be made in-house and not bought from a production company, the funding will be relatively better too, so don’t have any worries in that regard.”

Zhang Zuo said immediately, “You can rest assured too, Director Jiang. We will definitely cooperate well to get things done.”

Fu Sihong also said, “We already have some general direction and will try our best to quickly finish the first draft of the proposal.” Normally, there would be several drafts for a television program proposal. If the first one did not work, they would do it a second time, and if that also could not work out, then they would do it a third time. The possibility in getting an approval after the first attempt was close to zero as it needed to be altered several times according to new inputs and restrictions before the final proposal would be completed. It was sometimes possible that a proposal which started as a singing program would end up becoming an interview program. Fu Sihong added, “Give us three days, We will submit it to you in three days at the latest.”

Jiang Yuan nodded and said, “Alright, work hard on it, all of you.”

As they were talking, the executive director’s office door opened and Zhang Ye came out holding some handwritten papers. He said, “Eh, Director Jiang? Did you come to inspect our work?”

Jiang Yuan nodded, “I came to take a look.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Then your timing is perfect.” Waving the papers in his hands, he continued, “I’ve already written the new program’s proposal.”

Upon hearing this, Fu Sihong was stunned.

Jiang Yuan was also stunned.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest were also quite dumbfounded at this.

What did you say? It’s already completed? You took such a short time to write it all down? Just a while ago, Executive Producer Fu was still assuring Director Jiang that the program proposal would be completed within three days but you only took less than an hour to do it? That’s even faster than a spaceship! Regardless of whether it was other television stations or Central TV, a proposal for such a major variety program would surely have needed a minimum of three to five days to complete, right? That was already accounting for the best case scenario. For those with a much more detailed program proposal, it would be common to take up to half a month to write out. But you? You completed it in less than an hour? How could you come up with a good program proposal if you did it so hastily?

Everyone was at a loss for words.

Jiang Yuan remained silent for a very long time before he was finally unable to hold back and said, “Aren’t you being too efficient?”

Zhang Ye took it as a praise and said, “That’s right, I’ve always done my program proposals quickly since I’m never indecisive about my ideas. I will just write when I’ve given it enough thought, so that doesn’t take too much time to do.”

Fu Sihong said in disbelief, “You have really finished it?”

“I can’t possibly be lying, right?” Zhang Ye called for an administrative staff member and passed the papers to her. He said to her, “Little Wang, go make some copies of this and distribute them to everyone.”

Little Wang replied clearly, “OK.”

The copier sounded noisily as the copies were made.

A short while later, the copies were completed. Little Wang passed a copy to Jiang Yuan first, then to Fu Sihong, and finally to the rest of the colleagues.

Everyone quickly took it and had a look. Their first reaction was...how stunning! It was not the content that was stunning—they did not have enough time to read through it yet—but on first glance, they saw neatly lined up words written with fountain pen ink on paper. That harmonious feeling even seemingly gave “life”

to the paper. Looking at the program proposal was literally an enjoyment as the words were too beautiful. There was no one else at Central TV who could write with such beautiful handwriting!

Ha Qiqi could not help complimenting him, “What nice handwriting!”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Thank you.”

Zhang Zuo, Wu Yi, and the others all looked in the direction of Zhang Ye in surprise. They could not understand how such a careless person—who always went around scolding and fighting with others, creating fear in others of the entertainment industry—could have such a beautiful handwriting. It was rumored before that Zhang Ye had a high level of accomplishment in calligraphy? Now, it looked like those rumors were not fake! They could tell that just from the handwriting!

Chapter 634 – No Optimism For The Voice?

Everyone read the proposal.

Beside them, Zhang Ye explained, “This name of this program will be tentatively titled The Voice of China, or simply just The Voice. This is a large-scale singing talent show. The competition format is the same as other traditional singing programs, starting from the preliminary auditions, then letting the coaches choose their contestant students before proceeding to the group stages, and the finals after that. That’s the general process of the program.”

Jiang Yuan raised his head.

Fu Sihong and the others all looked at him as well. They no longer read from the proposal and were just listening to Zhang Ye explain it directly.

Zhang Ye explained fervently, “But if you all think that the program is just going to be this simple, then you’ve got it wrong. The program’s format might be the same as the traditional singing show format, but it’s core and selling point are different. When we do the studio setup, the seats of the four coaches are the key. During the auditions, the coaches’ seats are all facing with backs to the stage. They won’t see the contestant and won’t know their gender, height, or looks. They will only be able to hear their voice and singing talent, using these factors to decide if the contestant will pass or fail. This is also why the program’s name is The Voice!”

How does that sound?

Everyone must be stunned?

Everyone must be shocked? Right?

After Zhang Ye explained his proposal, he looked at them in satisfaction and waited for their reactions. He had predicted that everyone would feel shocked and clap or bow in amazement, but contrary to his expectations, the outcome was very different from how it played out in his mind. Everyone was shocked alright, but they were shocked from being horrified!

Zhang Zuo: “...”

Fu Sihong was badly shocked. “Are you serious?”

Zhang Ye said, “Of course.”

Ha Qiqi also drew a gasp and said, “This...how can this work!”

Zhang Ye asked, “What’s the matter? Is there a problem? Is this program’s proposal so difficult to understand?”

Fu Sihong said, “Although you claim that it is different, but to me, it sounds just the same as any other singing program that the other television stations are doing. At most you have an additional segment where the chairs turn around?”

Zhang Ye said, “The turning around of the chairs is just a means and strategy of the show. But with this additional segment, it would give the audience a totally different feel and experience while they watch the show. We’re basically telling them that our The Voice chooses the contestants based not on their backgrounds, their stories, their height, and especially not their looks. As long as they have a good voice and can sing well, they can show themselves to the world on the stage of The Voice! Essentially, this program’s aim is to go back to the basics of singing. We do not care about looks or stories, we will only listen to the voice!”

Zhang Zuo said in a stunned manner, “Only listen to the voice, this...”

Fu Sihong had a different view from him as he shook his head vigorously, saying, “But have you thought about this? If the stage will be adorned by only short, fat, or not good-looking contestants, then it would greatly affect the quality of the program. The image and effect would be totally shattered, so why would the audience want to watch that? In this industry, a competition-based program’s bottom line—if I may put it honestly—is the requirement of the contestant being a talking point. We need them to have outstanding appearances and great singing ability so that they can hold the stage and attention of the audience. If we’re talking about the program that you did earlier, that Do You Remember, then maybe this can be overlooked, since it isn’t a talent show program. But as long as it is one, then we can never escape that. A singing competition that does not have handsome guys or pretty women taking part—I do not see why the audience would want to watch something like that on their TVs. That is why I find this proposal to have very serious problems as it goes against the rules of a variety program!”

Zhang Ye shook his head and said, “Why can’t a talent show escape association with handsome guys and pretty women? That is only the mindset of the industry professionals; it’s a cage that they’ve placed themselves in. This program of mine precisely wants to target that mindset by not following those rules. It will be precisely because of this that the audience will want to watch, and like to watch, the program. Besides, I have never stated that the stage for The Voice will not have any good-looking people gracing its stage, did I? If the contestant can really sing, and also look good at the same time, then naturally it would be fine. But the only thing about the stage for The Voice is that the proportion of good-looking people might be smaller since the contestants would mostly still be fairly average-looking people.”

Fu Sihong insisted, “I feel that this program will not do well!”

Zhang Ye did not get angry at this but said, “The singing shows these days are unable to bring excitement simply because every other such program is doing exactly the same thing, being trapped by their traditional mindset. How I judge whether a program will be successful is not to see how the industry insiders analyze it with their performance indicators or experience. What I am looking for is the viewpoint of an audience on such a program.”

Fu Sihong retorted, “For a program producer, experience is the most valuable asset that they can fall back on.”

Zhang Ye looked at him and said, “Experience is molded from learning and references and is limited to this moment while the pace of innovation and the wisdom of humans are the only things

that are limitless. If the ancient people based everything on their experiences, then they would never have believed that there would be a day when humanity would go to the Moon. Do you think that what their experiences told them was correct then?”

The two of them wrangled over the matter, both making a stand for their own side of the argument.

But it was clear that after a few exchange of words, Fu Sihong had succumbed and could not outtalk Zhang Ye.

When Zhang Zuo, Ha Qiqi, and the others saw this, they simply decided not to retort at all. They knew very well that they were not as eloquent as someone who was a professional host like Zhang Ye and would not be able to outtalk him even if they combined their efforts together.

Honestly, Zhang Ye could not understand their concerns either. Why would anyone feel that such an innovative idea like The Voice would be bad? Wasn't that an international joke? It seemed to him that, even if they felt at the proposal stage that the talk show was not be good enough, it would be acceptable. After all, there was no precedent of an entertainment program like a talk show in this world. If they also felt that Do You Remember was not going to be good, that was also acceptable since this world did not have a low-barrier entry variety program for citizens to join and compete in an all-out PK match with other people. But that was not the case for The Voice at all. This program had such mass appeal and the features of the show could be clearly seen too! So why would a bunch of television industry professionals not understand that?

How odd!

Were their standards really that low?

Zhang Ye pondered over this for a very long time before finally coming to a conclusion. In Zhang Ye's previous world, when he was considered an audience member and outsider of the television industry, he immediately started looking forward to The Voice of China when its trailers began airing. Thinking about it now, it was probably not because his standard was higher than Fu Sihong, Ha Qiqi, and everyone else's, but more likely had to do with the understanding of his previous world's people's understanding of singing programs compared to the people here.

In Zhang Ye's previous world, The Voice was already very famous before it started its broadcast in China. This program was also shown on Dutch and American television where it did very well. When the television station in China purchased the rights to do The Voice, the local audience base was already built up due to foreign influence. Zhang Ye was also one of those people who already knew the format of the program, and as a result, anticipated its airing in China. Another point was that the singers from Zhang Ye's previous world came in the form of good-looking people as well as not good-looking people. Even those top singers, whether they looked good or ugly, were not too different in popularity from each other. Was Han Hong good looking? Was Sun Nan good looking? Was Wang Feng good looking? Was Hu Yanbin good looking? Was Huang Qishan good looking? Was Xiao Huangqi good looking? Was Zhao Chuan good looking? Was Lee Zhongsheng good looking? Some of them had very average looks, some of them were really not too good looking at all, yet they all got very popular based on their talent and vocals, even though

there was an element of luck at times too.

However, in this world?

Those A-or B-list singers were basically all good-looking men and women, among whom were scattered some who were not pretty or handsome, but couldn't be considered ugly either and were above average looking. If it really had to be insisted that there were ugly singers, it was also true, but such singers were really few and rare.

Those were the differences between the two worlds!

The perception of singers was different to the people of both worlds!

In this world, whether it be the programs or the media, they had always been advocating that you should have good looks if you wanted to be a celebrity. That was the bottom line before the focus would shift to whether you could sing or not. There was just such an unhealthy tone in the overall environment of the industry. Their understanding of a singer was different and Zhang Ye could understand this deeply, since he had also experienced being judged on his looks in his first interview back at Beijing Radio Station and was deemed unsuitable for the role. But if you thought about it, what was the point of a radio host being so good looking? Shouldn't it be fine as long as he wasn't bad looking? But that was not how they saw it. That was just how their perception in this world was, and thus resulted in the current state of the entertainment industry!

Fu Sihong and the others believed that a talent show had to be judged on looks first and foremost; the contestants' vocals were secondary, so if the proposal stated that the program would only care about the vocals and not the looks, they felt that it was just asking for it to fail since this concept itself was basically challenging the cognitive mindsets of how singing program should be!

But was it really asking to fail?

Would the audience really dismiss it?

Only Zhang Ye knew that this would definitely not be the case. It was just because the industry professionals believed that the audience would not accept it. Yet back in Zhang Ye's previous world, this had already been proven that the audience were accepting of such changes. Not only did they accept it, they even praised and recognized such types of shows. There were many people who specifically liked a show which portrayed the average-looking contestants in a competition since it more closely related to them! Zhang Ye wanted to tell Fu Sihong and the others that the audience was not as fragile and simple-minded as they thought. All those other singing programs were in themselves unhealthy existences in the entertainment industry!

However, whether The Voice would be accepted by the audience in this world was still unknown to Zhang Ye. But Zhang Ye was also an example himself. Didn't he look very ordinary? Wasn't he also not a handsome guy or pretty boy? But look at him now. He could still stand on the national stage and be recognized and loved by many people in the country. That of itself already explained

something. The environment and history of this world might have changed, but the hearts of the people remained!

There was silence in the office.

Nobody knew what to say.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others were all looking at each other.

This type of program was indeed controversial. If you said it was good? It was too extreme and would break all the rules of a talent show! But if you said it was bad? It sounded like a very innovative way of doing a show by basing it only on the voice, where the coaches would not be to see the contestants. This idea was totally unheard of in all singing programs at television stations all over the world!

Finally, Jiang Yuan spoke. He looked at Zhang Ye for a long time before he said, “In this industry, everyone says that you’re bold, daring to do the things that no one else dares even think about. I can say that I’ve finally seen that boldness for myself today.”

But Zhang Ye said, “To be honest, I’ve never had much courage. The reason why I dared to say that and want to do it is because I have one hundred percent certain that it will work out.”

Fu Sihong said in a speechless manner, “Why can you be so sure? You’re being too absolute!”

Jiang Yuan looked at Zhang Ye and said, “I’ve already mentioned to you our expectations when the television station invited you to join us. What we need is a program that will receive high viewership ratings consistently. Although you’re the executive director—and we’ve also agreed that the program production will be fully dictated by you—there is a clear disagreement right now about this proposal, which also shows that there is a problem with it. Why don’t I do it this way instead? I will bring a copy of the proposal back to discuss with the other leaders before I give you an answer. But it’s for the best that you also prepare another new proposal if The Voice does not pass the management’s approval, so then at least we can still have a backup.” From the sound of it, it also seemed like he did not have much confidence in the proposal.

Zhang Ye shook his head and said, “There’s no need to prepare another proposal. The Voice will not have any problems, that I guarantee. As for the quality of the program, everyone can judge it once it has finished recorded. Director Jiang, although I am a host, I am also a professional program planner and producer. Whether it be the programs or advertisements that I have done up before, I have never disappointed. You have to believe my most basic judgment as a professional.”

Having listened to all of this, Jiang Yuan could only say, “Alright, I’ll see what I can do.”

Chapter 635 – The Show Is Approved!

Jiang Yuan left.

Fu Sihong also went back to his own office.

Ha Qiqi suddenly said, “Teacher Zhang, are you really serious about making this program?”

“Of course I’m serious,” Zhang Ye said in frustration, “Do I look like I’m joking?”

Zhang Zuo proposed an idea, “I have a suggestion, but don’t take it in the wrong way, Teacher Zhang. Actually, we can modify the format of The Voice a little so that it looks to the audience that the gimmick of not seeing the contestants is real, but we will continue doing it the way we would for similar talent shows. We would still invite only the better-looking contestants to join the competition and secretly let the coaches know so that they have some idea of the contestants before choosing them, so that the ones who are chosen are the ones picked for their looks, attractability, and have a good talking point to them. That way, we would still be able to achieve our objectives.”

Wu Yi snapped his fingers and said, “That’s a very good idea!”

However, without even thinking, Zhang Ye immediately said, “When the television station does a program, we’re doing it to catch the hearts of the audience. We do that by leading them step by step into liking our program to achieve our objectives, but

leading them in does not mean lying to them. Don't think that the ways and means you believe are great would definitely be able to lead the audience in a certain direction. They are not fools and you should never look down on the wisdom and judgement of the masses. I should make myself very clear here: the singing programs now, and even the singing industry, are all not developing in a healthy way. My reason for doing this new program is not to make a statement, nor is it to lie to the audience by superficially reforming the industry. What I want to do is to make a program that will topple the traditional singing show and talent shows of the past!"

As their mindsets were too deeply ingrained in traditional thinking, Zhang Ye could not get it through to them even after explaining forever, so he decided to leave it at that and walked back to his office. He still had a lot of work to do, like planning the program trailers, making the designs of the set, and many other things, all of which he wanted to plan in advance. There was no time to waste on nonsense!

When he left, Zhang Zuo asked, "Do you think it's feasible?"

Ha Qiqi shook her head and said, "I don't know."

Another director said, "This program is very dangerous to do."

Wu Yi sighed and said, "Yeah, it's too radical of a change, so I suppose it's really risky as well."

"But it's possible that we cannot see what Zhang Ye sees." Ha

Qiqi added, “No matter what, Teacher Zhang is still a specialist at program production, so he’s surely looking at something bigger than we are. If Teacher Zhang can propose such a program and say that it is good, then he surely has his reasons and considerations.”

Zhang Zuo pessimistically said, “Hopefully.”

Ha Qiqi said, “Let’s wait and see how the leaders decide.”

Because this new show also determined the futures and careers of the program team’s staff, they were definitely worried about it and did not want it to be done sloppily.

At another place.

In a meeting room.

After Jiang Yuan went back to his office, he got his secretary to gather the planning team and related staff for a meeting. Everyone who was there were all veterans of Central TV Department 1 and were all very experienced, having done countless programs between them. They were all considered the core members of Central TV Department 1’s production team.

Jiang Yuan got his secretary to pass out Zhang Ye’s program proposal to each one of them and said, “Take a look. This is the program proposal written up by Zhang Ye. Let’s discuss it.”

Everyone started reading it in detail, and gradually, in succession, their faces formed some sort of startled expression.

“This...”

“What is this nonsense?”

“It’s very innovative, but this is too radical!”

“Other than the vocals, this singing talent show does not consider any other factors? Just what kind of bold person would dare to write up a proposal like that!? This would subvert the entire singing industry and related singing shows!”

“How audacious!”

“Only Zhang Ye would dare to do something like this!”

“The talented are bolder. I think this idea is worth a try.”

“What’s there to try? This is obviously not going to work. It is completely out of line with the market trends and practices. Do you think that just basing the show on vocals alone would attract the viewers? The gimmick of judging a contestant based on just their vocals would be able to prop up the entire talent show? This is not a variety program that would last one or two episodes; it’s a competition that stretches over at least two months. I won’t say

that using vocals as an attraction is not innovative, but it is not strong enough to carry the show. The audiences might not be able to accept it either. We know that just by looking at the other singing shows. The hotly discussed champions and runner-ups always do well in the looks department! That has clearly shown where the audience's taste lie at."

"How the other satellite channels are doing it does not reflect the problems at all. If the idea of only focusing on the vocals of the contestants were conveyed to the audience beforehand, the mindset of the audience would also be different when they watch the show and they might accept Zhang Ye's selling point for the program. But of course, there's no guarantee for that since there isn't any precedent of something like this."

"I don't think it will work."

"I feel that it might just be a thin line between failure and success. As there's no way to predict this based on our experiences without any precedent to fall back on, if there's something that we can learn from and judge upon, then it has to be that regardless of Zhang Ye's character and temper, he really is a very capable person. The programs he handled previously have had no precedent of failure yet and have even gone on to do quite well. So from those examples, I have to admit that Zhang Ye's vision is surely better than most people's."

"That's true. If it were any other program producer who submitted this proposal, I would surely reject it. But because this proposal was written up by Zhang Ye, I am unable to make any judgment on it. Most of us here are professional program

producers too, but if we compare the results of the programs that we've all worked on, then our results and qualifications are truly unable to match Zhang Ye's. I've also heard that there are some foreign television stations who have shown interest in the copyrights for Zhang Ye's Talk Show?"

"I've heard about that too. I think those foreigners are really interested in it, but then I don't know if they have approached Zhang Ye regarding the copyrights yet. If he is really able to sell it to them, then this will be a historical first for foreign television stations buying our Chinese television copyrights. We would finally have foreigners approaching us to learn from us! How uplifting! This would also give our Chinese television and variety industry a boost, since we'd finally have a world-class program!"

"But The Voice and Zhang Ye's Talk Show are different. The talk show cuts a figure of being Zhang Ye's creative whim, but singing shows have already been heavily produced and are very well-established in our industry. Now that Zhang Ye is intending to defy the market trends and go against everything that we've known, will it work?"

Everyone here was also having their disagreements, some suggesting to give it a try while others rejected it outright.

Jiang Yuan looked at the program proposal and lowered his head in silence too. His viewpoint was the same as what someone had mentioned just now. If the proposal was submitted by anyone else, he would have rejected it directly without a thought. However, the problem here was that this proposal was submitted by Zhang Ye, who was known as the man who repeatedly created viewership

miracles!

At around 4 PM in the afternoon.

Jiang Yuan returned to the new program's office. He called out, "Little Zhang?"

Hearing that, Zhang Ye came out from his office.

Fu Sihong, Ha Qiqi, and the others were also beside him, knowing that the decision was probably made at the meeting.

Jiang Yuan's first words to Zhang Ye were: "Are you very sure that this program will work out?"

"I am sure. In fact, I guarantee it," Zhang Ye said without any sign of hesitation.

Jiang Yuan nodded and said, "You have been given the go-ahead to do The Voice, but if the average ratings fall below 0.8%, what would you say to that?"

Zhang Ye said, "0.8%?"

Jiang Yuan said, "Yes."

Zhang Ye was amused at this question, so he said, “Then I will pack up and leave.”

That was exactly what Jiang Yuan wanted to hear. He said, “Alright then, from today onward, The Voice of China will formally begin its production. I hope that the final product that you all come up with will be something satisfactory.”

Zhang Ye laughed, “Just wait and see.”

Fu Sihong interrupted, “Director Jiang.”

Jiang Yuan stopped him and said, “Don’t bother saying anymore. It’s been decided.”

Thinking how Zhang Ye had already put his job on the line, Fu Sihong also did not say anything more. From his point of view, he believed that Jiang Yuan was also likely to not have too much confidence in this new program.

Jiang Yuan said, “I want you guys to come up with an application documentation later so that I can bring it to Finance and inform them. For the initial funding, I will be setting aside 20 million RMB for your team.”

When Zhang Ye heard this, he couldn’t accept it. He said, “Director Jiang, 20 million is definitely not enough. In fact, it’s far from enough and won’t be enough to support this program.”

Jiang Yuan said, “I’ve already pushed very hard for the go-ahead for this program at the meeting earlier. The disagreements over this new program proposal were raised by many people, so you must know that I’m also facing a great deal of pressure.”

Zhang Ye said, “20 million is not enough to invite a few proper guest celebrities as coaches, not to mention that we still need a budget for the set, stage facilities, and a live band for the show. Director Jiang, didn’t you say earlier that you have plenty of funding for us?”

Jiang Yuan said noncommittally, “That is all I can give for now. If you need additional funding in the future, we’ll talk about it again. What I need now is the promotional trailer for the show so that we can release it to the public and get some feedback. If it gets a warm reception, then we can discuss the additional funding.”

Only when he said that did Zhang Ye stop talking.

20 million?

It’s not too much even if its 200 million!

Forget it, it’s better to take it slow. If he were to ask for 200 million from the station now, the whole of Central TV Department 1 would probably vomit blood and treat him as a madman. After all, according to what Zhang Ye knew, the Central TV Department 1 of this world had never ever invested so much funding into a program before. 20 million was already considered to be a large investment into a program. Some of the other Central TV

Department 1 programs only had a budget of several million RMB. For some interview programs, if not taking into account the host's salary or not inviting any big shot guests, then even if it aired 4 times a month, it would only have a budget of 1 million, which was really cheap. But variety shows were not the same; those were part of a genre that basically gobbled up money. No matter how much was spent, it was never enough.

Jiang Yuan left.

Zhang Zuo, Ha Qiqi, and the rest were left in a predicament!

Zhang Zuo was feeling a little dizzy. "0.8% for viewership ratings?"

Ha Qiqi also did not look too good. She said, "Even the most outstanding and well-received singing program this year, Do You Remember, only received 0.8% for its highest-rated episode. When it was low, it only got 0.7% or less. To demand of our new program a viewership rating of 0.8% when it's just going to start? And it's even the average rating? Teacher Zhang, weren't you promising to leave too easily earlier?"

If they could not hit the requested viewership ratings, then Zhang Ye would automatically quit?

Even though the team was supposedly led by Fu Sihong, everyone knew that the real leader was actually Zhang Ye. Everything revolved around Zhang Ye's existence. If he went, then the program would be canceled as well. The team's members would all

face an uncertain future from here on out.

An average of 0.8%!

There hadn't been any singing program this year that had hit that number yet!

Even if the later episodes of Do You Remember finished airing, the average would surely not hit 0.8%! At most it would be 0.7% or so.

Ha Qiqi said, "Teacher Zhang, you should have made a bargain just now."

Wu Yi also added, "Yeah, a nationwide viewership rating of 0.6% was still possible to work toward, but 0.8% is really too difficult. If they really want a viewership rating of 0.8%, that would mean the program would have to place first in the same time period across the nation, and it's even going to have a large lead over second place! Can we accomplish such a task?"

Everyone was feeling extremely stressed.

Fu Sihong also kept shaking his head.

However, only Zhang Ye looked like he was not bothered by it and even appeared very relaxed. He kept his smile without seeming the least bit worried because he did not feel that a viewership rating of 0.8% was demanding at all. Instead, he even felt that this

was low, so low that he nearly laughed at it!

Hur hur!

0.8%?

Can't hit that number?

You guys are insulting me! You're all too looking down on me, Zhang Ye!

If The Voice really gets a viewership rating of 0.8%, then would I still have wasted so much effort to try to do this program? If you used 0.8% and doubled it, that would be more like it! That's the figure that should be used as the estimate and goal. But of course, Zhang Ye would not tell them all this. Because only Zhang Ye knew of the logic defying viewership ratings of The Voice back in his world. Even if he told people that, they would definitely not believe him!

It was not a viewership rating that should be described with a zero point rating! The Voice of his previous world was to be described with a viewership rating that broke past the zero barrier!

Let's wait and see!

When the viewership ratings for The Voice come out, all of you will understand just how expansive the sky is!

First place for the same time period? First place for the entire term of all variety programs—that was what Zhang Ye's expectation for The Voice was!

Chapter 636 – Public Outcry!

Later that afternoon.

It was time to leave from Central TV.

Fu Sihong had gone home, but Zhang Ye stayed behind and also asked the others to stay as well and called them to a spacious performance studio. This was the studio that Central TV Department 1 had allocated for their new program and was pretty large in area. It was previously being used by a talent show program and the place has not been cleared out yet. There were still some light boxes lying around on the ground and in some corners. In terms of its size, Zhang Ye was quite satisfied with it. A station like Central TV did not have a lack of venues. Compared to those other satellite channels, at which some programs had to share a venue between themselves and two or three other programs, Central TV's standout points were that they had large places, a good policy, as well as many employees.

“I'm afraid that it will be too rushed tomorrow, so I want to delegate some tasks first. It probably won't take up more than 15 minutes of everyone's time.” Zhang Ye asked, “Has the green light for the funding been given?”

Ha Qiqi said, “It's been given. We have 20 million.”

Zhang Ye nodded, then pointed around the venue and said, “This is where our program will be filmed. The station still takes quite good care of us since they've allocated the largest performance

studio to us. I won't do things like asking everyone to shout some team motto or whatever. There's no need for unnecessary stuff like that. Everything still boils down to what we show by our practical actions, and because I'm still unfamiliar with what every one of you here specializes in, I took the initiative to plan out the tasks first. If any one of you is responsible for the job I mention or think that you're up for it, please tell me."

"OK."

"No problem."

"Just give us your instructions, Director Zhang."

Everyone listened intently.

Zhang Ye said, "These tasks relate to the progress of the program's production, so I need everyone to do them well. The first thing is in regard to the website. Our new program will need to have a microsite on the website of Central TV Department 1 or have a standalone website of its own. Its purpose will be promoting and updating the latest news on our program and act as a platform to interact with the public. In the future, there will also be spontaneous polls for audiences to take part in, so I don't think I need to emphasize how important this is. I want two people to be in charge of the content for this and to network with the main Central TV website team to get it up and running."

A female editor said, "Let me handle it, that's my specialty."

A young male editor looked to his left and right before he raised his hand and said, “Count me in too. I was from the department that handled the official website before I came here, so I know quite a few people who I could get help from to code the microsite and prioritize it for us.”

Zhang Ye said, “Good, thank you then.”

The female and male editors said together at once, “You’re welcome.”

Zhang Ye continued, “The next thing is in regard to the preparations for the preliminary auditions. Sister Qi, I leave this to you. Please approach the station first for some marketing and promotional resources, like the reservations for a television commercial slot or website advertisement banner position so that we can put out information like the registration contact number and application methods. After that, set aside a time and arrange for the applicants to come in waves for the preliminary auditions. Although the actual audition will be done in the studio and recorded, there is still a need to do a preliminary audition so we can pick out the contestants who fit the vocal requirements of show.”

Ha Qiqi responded, “Sure, just leave that to me.”

Zhang Ye gave her a heads-up on this and said, “Your task will be the most difficult one, but it’s also the most important and critical part of the program. If you need more help, you can allocate more people to your team.”

Ha Qiqi laughed and said, “Good, it’s good timing since we’re expecting more people to join our program team tomorrow.”

“Then last but not least, the venue layout and equipment.” Zhang Ye looked at Zhang Zuo and said, “Brother Zhang, I leave this recording studio’s work to you, so please help us to take control of that.”

Assistant Director Zhang Zuo said, “Sure, what requests do you have?”

Zhang Ye said, “How is the quality of the audio equipment of our Central TV Department 1 as well as the studio equipment?”

Zhang Zuo blinked a few times and said, “It’s pretty good. It won’t be any lousier than the other satellite channel’s equipment at least. Most of what we have are professional grade hardware, with some of it being internationally top-tier equipment. They were fitted just last year, but some others are a little older, though still considered higher-end equipment in the country. Overall, it’s not too shabby.”

When Zhang Ye heard that, he shook his head, “That’s not going to cut it. The stage for our new program depends greatly on the audio quality, so even if just some of it is not too bad, that means it’s still not good enough. If that’s the case, then it would mean our setup is just so-so. My principles when it comes to making a program is to either make it the best in the industry or not do it at all. That’s why, when it comes to the equipment and setup, we

need it to be the very best. I won't accept any shortcomings, especially in the area of audio quality. If Central TV has the necessary hardware to support our requirements, then we will borrow them. If not then we will have to find something we can rent, but if they aren't even available for rent, then we will buy them!"

Zhang Zuo received a fright from this. "Buy it ourselves?"

Ha Qiqi also said nervously, "But we don't have enough budget to buy them."

Zhang Ye, who was also not too familiar with the market price, asked, "How much do we need?"

"You might not be aware of it." Zhang Zuo said, "If you really intend to get brand new, top-tier equipment, then the whole setup would cost over 10 million, minimum. That's already a very conservative estimate, and would include having already borrowed some items from the station. The kind of setup you're aiming for would burn a big hole in our pockets, so if you want something that is the very, very best, it could amount to several tens of millions. On top of that, there's also the troublesome portion of the technicalities. Since it would be a totally new setup, our staff would still need some time to pick up and learn how to operate it. With the 20 million in funding from our station, it's..."

Zhang Ye frowned. Even with the scenario of the program team borrowing most of the top-tier equipment from the station, it would still cost over 10 million??

It was too expensive!

It was too damn expensive!

But Zhang Ye still said firmly, “Try to borrow first. If that doesn’t work out, buy them!”

Zhang Zuo said, “Then wouldn’t we have no money left over to do other things?”

Zhang Ye said, “The equipment must be ready before everything else, so the pressure will be on your side. No matter what it takes, the props and equipment must be the best. Don’t you all worry about the funding, I will think of a way. Let me handle whatever that needs to be handled on the backend.”

‘OK, I understand.’ Zhang Zuo was also turning steadfast now that Zhang Ye had given his word to back them up. He did not have to bother about anything else anymore, so he said, “I will communicate with the Equipment Department tonight and write a list of items we require. If Central TV does not have them, I’ll get their purchasing manager to help quote a figure.”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Good, then that’s about it. Since the tasks have been allocated, everyone, please go home and rest well. Starting tomorrow, we will have a tough battle to fight.”

Wu Yi was a little surprised. He said, “Director Zhang.”

“Yes?” Zhang Ye was still quite unused to being addressed in that way.

Wu Yi asked, “Is that all for the tasks? What about the promotional copy....”

Zhang Ye said, “Oh, I will handle that.”

Wu Yi said in surprise, “The invitation for the coaches to join the program...”

Zhang Ye said, “I will contact them.”

Wu Yi was becoming even more surprised now. So he said, “Then the advertising copy...”

Zhang Ye said, “When the website is ready, I will write it.”

Wu Yi said, “Then would you also possibly be handling the participating and title sponsors....”

Zhang Ye said, “Leave that to me as well.”

“Ah?” Ha Qiqi looking a little embarrassed, said, “How can you handle all that by yourself? Those tasks are too broad. Why don’t you delegate some to me. I still have the capacity to handle a little more.”

The other members of the program team also scrambled to offer their help to Zhang Ye.

However, Zhang Ye waved them off and said, “There’s no need for that, we’ll talk about it again.”

For some of the more important and trickier to handle tasks, Zhang Ye decided that he would take them on himself. Even though he was already an executive director, he did not leave all the work to others. Why would he let others do all the dirty work while he sat in the office sipping tea and relaxing? If he did that, the others would not be convinced by him. So Zhang Ye decided that he would get down to work as well. Besides, he was not the type who could sit around doing nothing and not feel bored. With The Voice of China about to make its imminent premiere, he was also itching to do as much as he could. Even if he were forced to rest, he couldn’t do it since he was well known for being a workaholic!

The meeting ended.

Most of the team’s staff left work, while some voluntarily stayed behind to clock some overtime, for instance the assistant directors, Zhang Zuo and Ha Qiqi. Since Zhang Ye was already very clear with his instructions, they couldn’t slack off either. A viewership rating of 0.8% was too great a goal. The pressure they were facing was enormous, so they knew that they had to try their very best this time!

Zhang Ye did not work overtime because Chenchen was still with him at the television station. He didn't mind working late or staying behind in the office, but Chenchen couldn't, so after he prepared a simple advertising copy for the preliminary auditions for Ha Qiqi, he took Chenchen home for dinner.

That night.

The official website of Central TV Department 1 started running a promotional ad for a new program.

“Central TV Department 1 joins hands with Zhang Ye. Auditions for a large-scale singing talent show are beginning! ”

Below the title was an introduction for the program: Regardless of looks, height, age, or occupation, as long as you're blessed with a good voice and hold a strong passion for music, come and register for the auditions immediately. What are you still waiting for?

Registration Hotline 1: 400-8XXXXXXX.

Registration Hotline 2: 400-8XXXXXXX.

Liaison: The Voice of China Program Team.

Actually, the ad was placed in a spot that wasn't too good. After all, this wasn't some television commercial. However, it was

exactly this inconspicuous program ad that had created a stir online. Just one minute after the ad was posted, already a new thread had been created with an accompanying screenshot!

“Heavens! Zhang Ye has a new program!”

“Oh my god! That’s too fast!”

“Yeah, didn’t Zhang Ye just started work at Central TV Department 1 today? How could he already have news of a new program in the evening when he only started work in the morning? What kind of efficiency is that! Teacher Zhang is indeed the celebrated ‘fastest draw’ in the industry. Whether it’s in producing programs or advertisements, there’s only one way to describe it—fast!”

“But why is it a singing talent show?”

“Zhang Ye is making yet another singing program?”

“Dammit, I was still predicting that he would do a reality show! How did it turn into a singing talent show? Why did it turn out to be a singing talent show? It’s a totally different genre from what I had expected!”

“The Voice of China? What a terrible name!”

“F**k, could this really be Zhang Ye’s new program?”

As the thread heated up, countless netizens rushed over to take a look!

This included many television industry insiders as well! They were all very concerned about this topic.

A verified industry insider from Beihe Provincial Television Station said: “Regardless of looks? Regardless of occupation? Regardless of age? Can a talent show be done in such a way? What’s the selling point of the program then? At first glance, it feels like this is a very innovative idea, but if this is a talent show, then the program would barely be watched by anyone. At most, it would be a program that would gain a cult following. I believe the viewer ratings won’t pass 0.4%!”

Another industry insider also said: “To be honest, I’m quite disappointed at this. Having seen Zhang Ye’s previously proposed program Do You Remember, I ended up having great expectations for his new program to be another innovative work just like his Zhang Ye’s Talk Show and Do You Remember, but what is the meaning of The Voice of China? Regardless of looks and age? That has to be some sort of a gimmick, right? It’s impossible that a television station would dare to go against the market trends and practices like this. This program will surely end up just like any other traditional singing talent show that is no different from the others, therefore I cannot understand why Zhang Ye would still jump into such a genre when such programs are so abundantly broadcast with up to four or five such shows per month. Isn’t the audience already getting sick of them?”

A third industry insider said: “I don’t get it either. For someone who is able to create such an innovative show like Do You Remember, why did Zhang Ye not choose to take another path and instead walk a road that is packed with countless other competitors? If this were the case, then why did he sell Do You Remember back then and not leave it for himself instead?”

Someone raised a doubt: “Based on Zhang Ye’s experience, it’s impossible that he did not take that into consideration. Could it be just as they had advertised it, that the singing program will only be focused on vocals alone?”

“That’s quite impossible!”

“Yeah, no one would dare to do such a thing.”

“If it were really a talent show that only focuses on vocals alone, who would want to watch such a show? That would be worse than the current singing programs that we have, wouldn’t it?”

The television industry insiders were generally quite pessimistic about the chances of this new program, similar to how those veterans at Central TV Department 1 felt earlier.

The netizens’ reactions were much more diverse. Zhang Ye’s hardcore fans were supporting the new show without any hesitation.

“Supporting Teacher Zhang!”

“It won’t go wrong if it’s Zhang Ye’s production!”

“Haha, looking forward to Teacher Zhang’s new show!”

“Experience tells us not to doubt Teacher Zhang’s decision no matter what. Otherwise, once the dust clears, you’ll find that your face has become swollen!”

“Right, although I also do not understand where the profoundness of The Voice of China lies at, I will still support Teacher Zhang unconditionally. There’s nothing else to say except to tune in to the program on time. Teacher Zhang’s show will definitely be a good watch. He has never disappointed us before in the past, present, and will not disappoint us in the future either!”

“Well said!”

“Zhang Ye’s fan club has gathered!”

“Let’s help Teacher Zhang promote and forward it!”

However, there were also other netizens who were not optimistic about it.

“A talent show that only focus on vocals? That won’t get much of an audience at all!”

“That’s right. If there’s someone who looks terribly ugly with a height of 1.4 meters, even if he sings really well, no one could like him, right? Who wants to look at someone like that? If I watch that, I want it to be a pretty lady!”

“Agreed. Just listening to the vocals is not too reliable, right?”

“Although I would like to agree that a singer should have good vocals as a main attraction, looks are still very important. They are public personalities no matter what, so they need to look friendly to others at the very least, isn’t that true?”

“Is Zhang Ye intending to undermine the traditional singing talent show genre?”

“I agree with what the industry insider said earlier. It’s definitely a gimmick that they’re claiming that only the voice will be used to judge the contestants. It’s just a bluff that’s being used to confuse everyone. The show will still be carried out in the old way.”

“Then there’s even less reason to watch it.”

“Yeah, there are too many singing talent shows these days!”

“What is Zhang Ye trying to do? What is Central TV Department 1 doing?”

“Zhang Ye is indeed Zhang Ye! The way he does things has always left everyone unable to understand why he does them that way!”

Just a tiny banner ad on the Central TV website had created such a big reaction from so many people on the internet. It was probably only Zhang Ye who could invoke such a reaction, as that guy's name itself already represented controversy. No matter how famous he was or how much he had achieved, just his personality that dared to do what no one else dared to was enough to put him in the same breath as "controversy." Nothing could be done about this. After all, this was how the entertainment industry worked!

Chapter 637 – Pulling For Advertising Sponsorships!

The next day.

In the morning.

“Zhang Ye, wake up.” Chenchen pushed him.

Zhang Ye rolled over and said drowsily, “Don’t disturb me.”

Chenchen pushed harder and said, “Zhang Ye, get up. Zhang Ye, get up.”

Chenchen was like a little alarm clock and proved to be more effective than any other alarm clock. Zhang Ye was so affected that he could not sleep anymore and helplessly got out of the bed while yawning away. He then went out to buy breakfast for Chenchen without even washing his face.

At a stall selling breakfast outside the district.

Many people were sitting in the open air area and enjoying their breakfast.

“Yo, Little Zhang.”

“Teacher Zhang, you’re awake?”

“Good morning, Teacher Zhang.”

“Brother Zhang, you’re here for breakfast?”

The old neighbors and the vendor of the breakfast stall greeted Zhang Ye in the way they always did.

Some of the people who did not live around here or were just passing by and having breakfast here for the first time were clearly clueless about what was going on. When they saw Zhang Ye’s sloppy image walking leisurely toward them, some of them nearly peed their pants from being shocked and dumbfounded. F**k, wasn’t that Zhang Ye! They could even bump into a B-list celebrity while having breakfast? Their first reaction was that they must have seen something wrong. How could a B-list celebrity dress so sloppily and come out onto the streets! Besides, who had ever encountered such a big shot celebrity eating their breakfast at such a dirty, everyday stall? Were they shooting a TV drama or a movie? But why were there no director or cameras to be seen anywhere? There were all kinds of thoughts.

Zhang Ye greeted the old neighbors and then said to the vendor, “I’ll have three fried dough sticks and two bowls of tofu pudding. Carryout.” Then he took a seat listlessly.

At this moment, a reporter who was lying in ambush at a nearby spot came running out towards him. Holding out a recording pen, he interviewed him, saying, “Teacher Zhang, I’m from

Entertainment Weekly Magazine.”

Zhang Ye said as he fought his droopy eyelids, “Oh, hello.”

The reporter said, “I heard that after you joined Central TV Department 1, the new program The Voice of China is already undergoing production preparations, but many industry insiders and audience members do not seem to acknowledge it. They’ve raised many doubts and feel that it would be a mistake to subvert the concept of the talent shows and that it would conflict with the market trends.”

Zhang Ye said, “Oh.”

The reporter immediately asked, “What is your view on that?”

Zhang Ye said, “Nothing much.”

The reporter exclaimed, “Are you confident about your new program?”

“—Passable.” Zhang Ye said.

The reporter was shocked and said, “Ah? What do you mean by passable? Are you not confident about it at all?”

“—So-so,” Zhang Ye said.

That reporter was puzzled. This shouldn't be Zhang Ye's style. Shouldn't he be more outraged? Wasn't he supposed to come up with a poem or two to scold those doubters? Wasn't he supposed to give a strong and spirited comeback at those people? What the heck was with this attitude? Why was he so dispirited today? This was not his style at all! As an entertainment reporter, he was not used to Zhang Ye's current indifferent attitude. After a barrage of questions, Zhang Ye was answering like he was still half-asleep and had absolutely no fighting spirit.

Doubts?

Criticism?

Zhang Ye was already numb to all of these. Not only him, as long as they were in the entertainment industry, no one could escape from it. Wasn't Zhang Yuanqi famous as well? Wasn't she reputable? Wasn't she popular? Those who scolded her would still scold her every day and those who doubted her would still continue to doubt her, let alone Zhang Ye. He was more interested in getting his breakfast and going back to sleep awhile longer before heading to work.

.....

Later in the morning.

At Central TV.

When Zhang Ye led Chenchen into the office, they heard someone speaking in a loud voice.

Fu Sihong said, “We are spending all of the 20 million on this?”

Zhang Zuo grunted, “Uh.”

Fu Sihong asked, “Was it even necessary to use all of that 20 million to purchase the equipment?”

Zhang Zuo replied, “It was instructed by Director Zhang.”

Zhang Ye also joined in and asked, “Brother Fu, what’s the matter?”

When Fu Sihong saw Zhang Ye, he had a face full of displeasure. Then he said, “Teacher Zhang, you might be in charge of the program production but for such a big matter, but shouldn’t you at least discuss it with me beforehand? If all of the 20 million was going to spent on equipment for the set, then what about the other expenses? How would we be able to invite the coaches? How can we pay for the contestants’ transport, food, and accommodation? And as for all other miscellaneous expenses, how will we deal with those? Your decision this time was too rash!”

Zhang Ye said, “Yesterday, I wanted to meet with you on this but you’d already left, so I intended to tell you about it this morning. We can’t scrimp on what’s essential and must spend on what’s necessary. We cannot afford to be indecisive on such things as this

is also a responsibility for the program and audience.”

Fu Sihong retorted with a question, “How do we solve the lack of funding then?”

Zhang Ye said, “I’m preparing to apply for more funding from Director Jiang.”

Jiang Yuan happened to be just outside the office and heard a little of their conversation, so he asked, “What do you want to apply from me?” It was a habit of his to make the rounds at the respective program teams every day before he started work.

When Fu Sihong saw that the leader had arrived, he immediately reported to him about the situation.

After hearing about the situation, Jiang Yuan was also very shocked. He said, “You’re going to spend 20 million on purchasing the equipment for the stage’s set?”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Yes.”

“Is there really such a need?” Jiang Yuan could not understand his motivation.

Zhang Ye said, “This is a must if we want to guarantee a high viewer rating. We can’t save on this amount of money because what we’re selling is the quality of vocals.”

Jiang Yuan said, “We already have the basic equipment in the station, are they really so different from those top-tier equipment? Most people would probably not be able to differentiate it, right?”

Zhang Ye shook his head and said, “This was something I did some research into last night. During the television broadcast transmission, if the equipment used is different, the quality and performance of the sound and other aspects would not be as good. That is also the reason why those top-tier equipment are so expensive. Director Jiang, you have to trust me on this and leave the production of the program to me. Give me a little more funding for the program and I will surely return the trust with a program that exceeds all expectation in terms of the viewership ratings.”

Jiang Yuan immediately said, “You’ve spent 20 million just like that, so no matter how much more is given to you, it won’t be enough!”

Zhang Ye shouted, “But you can’t just make a horse constantly run without feeding it. The station has set a 0.8% viewership rating as a target. Everyone knows that this number will be difficult to hit, but if we want to reach this target, then we must invest proportionately. In fact, the amount invested now will be returned by multiple times that in the future. But if the investment now is discounted, then the future viewership ratings will also be discounted.”

Jiang Yuan spoke, “The details of the new program and auditions were already released yesterday. You should have seen the response online. Other than your fans, everyone else did not have

high expectations for this program. The overall market response was also quite negative. I know that the program is still in pre-production and the final product is not out yet, so no one knows how it will turn out. But the reaction of the audience and their expectations are also a kind of feedback, so me approving more funding to you really puts me in a very difficult situation. I'm unable to make the decision on my own."

Zhang Ye wasn't too happy either. Oh, before he came here, he was promised to be given full control with complete support and extensive funding. But when he was ready to produce the program, he was given all sorts of excuses? Why was it so difficult just to get some things done!

He knew that Central TV had its advantage in that it had a huge amount of resources. But similarly, it also had its disadvantage: the traditional thinking of the organization. They always sought stability in their projects and were afraid of bearing responsibility. With such a culture, it would be difficult to do anything and things would surely get delayed!

Fu Sihong asked, "How much do you still need? You have to at least give us an estimation."

Zhang Ye honestly said, "At least 60 million more."

Jiang Yuan immediately responded, "That's impossible. Even if the response from the audience is good, the station will still not grant 80 million RMB in production fees. Do you know the total budgeted production expenses for this year's Central TV Department 1's programs? So how can just you alone take up so

much of it just like that? Unless you can sell the title of the program and get the money ahead of the broadcast, then with advertisement revenue injected, the funding you require will be met. But these days, singing programs are saturating the market, thus leading to a market downturn. In the eyes of those companies, it would not be wise to buy a title. For other similarly performing singing talent shows with good viewership ratings, the title money can only fetch around 20 million RMB or so, while many others can only price their titles like a cabbage at the market and sell it for less than 10 million RMB with the advertising rights fee even less. That is the current situation of the market, so even if you manage to land a 20 million title sponsorship, it is still not close to your requested amount and would not be enough for you to use.”

10 or 20 million?

The title sponsorships of this world were that low?

That might also be true. If there were no good programs and with variety programs continuing to be in a downturn while the market shrank and the audience base dispersed, the title sponsorship rights would also naturally decline in value.

But what if there was a good program? What if there was a television program that could sweep all the other programs off their feet in the variety world? Then the title sponsorship would definitely not be something that was worth just tens of millions! Zhang Ye believed, no, to be accurate, he knew that The Voice would be a world-class program which defied all logic. That was why he had high expectations of the title sponsorship and already had designs on this large piece of the pie.

Zhang Ye immediately said, “Director Jiang, so what you mean is that the title sponsorship can directly be injected into the program team’s funding and be allocated freely by me?”

Jiang Yuan looked at him and said, “Your program hasn’t even been finalized yet, so how could you find any sponsors?”

Fu Sihong looked at Zhang Ye as though he were a layman and said, “Normally, we would have to at least confirm the core team and guests for the television program before we contact the sponsors and advertisers. Right now, we only have a program plan and the coaches have also not been decided yet, so which company would dare buy the title sponsorship? That would be too hasty. Besides, if they bought the title sponsorship at this point, the price would also not be very high. At most it would work out to a base price.”

Zhang Ye probed, “But it will be our funding, right?”

Jiang Yuan said, “Yes, as long as you can sell it, I can decide to give you the full sum of the title sponsorship. But as for the fees other than the title sponsorship, like the advertising rights fees, all of those must go to Central TV Department 1. You can’t touch it, and neither can I.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Alright then.”

That’s just what he wanted to hear.

If you aren't going to be supportive? Then I will think of a way by myself!

At this moment, Zhang Ye felt that it was time to work on his eloquence. The amount of money he needed to bring in would be dependent on how well he used his mouth. If he could really restore that world-renowned program, The Voice, from his previous world back as it was, and do it well, he definitely couldn't skimp on the production costs. Otherwise, he would be better off not doing it at all!

Chapter 638 – Would You Believe It?

Day.

The leader left.

The program team's office of The Voice was filled with whisperings.

“Teacher Zhang is really eyeing the title sponsorship?”

“But it hasn't even started production yet. Where's he going to get that from?”

“Even if he could get some company to sponsor it, it wouldn't be much. It's definitely not going to be enough for Teacher Zhang's budget, so what's he going to do? The remaining money that we have is not even enough to sign a few B-list celebrities as the program's coaches, right?”

“The station is also to blame. Why don't they just give us a little more?”

“Actually, 20 million is already a lot. If not for the station giving us the green light, just look at the other programs' production costs, they're not even close to 10 million, right? It's just because Teacher Zhang's ideal program requires too much money. I wonder what kind of coaches Teacher Zhang is intending to invite when he said that he wanted 80 million in total production

money? Could he be thinking of getting some Heavenly Kings and Queens to be the judges and coaches? Being able to sign those S-list celebrities....It would be difficult to invite them even if we had a lot of money, isn't that so?"

"We definitely won't understand what Director Zhang is thinking."

"Teacher Zhang is really trying too hard to chase perfection."

"I just hope that the program will become popular, or else the money we spend will really all be lost."

"Ai, I guess we can only leave it to Zhang Ye from here."

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others were still relatively calm in this situation; in contrast the other editors and writers were unable to sit still any longer.

In the executive director's office.

Little Wang came in and asked, "Were you looking for me?"

Chenchen grabbed Zhang Ye's cell phone and went to the sofa to play some games. Zhang Ye said to Little Wang, "Yes, Little Wang. Help me to compile a list of big companies that we can contact, preferably those enterprise-or corporation-level companies, like

the ones that sell herbal tea or milk. If you don't have their information, find the relevant Central TV department to request for a copy. I need to contact some of them regarding the title sponsorship matter, so please hurry on that."

Little Wang responded, "Sure."

About 20 minutes later, the list of companies and contact numbers was ready.

Zhang Ye browsed through the company names but as he was still quite unfamiliar with the companies of this world, he did not know which one was better, so he decided to just give them all a call.

"Hello, is this Daily Milk?"

"Yes."

"I'm calling from Central TV Department 1's The Voice of China. This is the executive director of the program team speaking."

"Oh?"

"We are currently preparing a new, large-scale singing talent show and the exclusive title sponsorship is still available, so I would like to ask if your company is interested. I can tell you more about our show...."

“Sorry, we are currently not looking for any opportunities in this area.”

“Alright then, thank you.”

“If we are interested, we will contact you again.”

“OK.”

Then he made the next call.

This time, Zhang Ye wised up. He began to speak persuasively with charm.

“Hello, is this Almond Tea?”

“Yes, and you?”

“I am Zhang Ye from Central TV Station.”

“Ah? You’re Zhang Ye? Which Zhang Ye?”

“I should be the Zhang Ye that you’re thinking about.”

“Aiyo, why did you call us for?”

“Our new program has just started production on our new program. It’s going to be on Central TV Department 1’s Thursday evening slot, but the title sponsorship has not been confirmed yet. Although the competition between the corporations is getting quite heated, we are still not too satisfied with them as the product’s image does not mirror our program’s image. That is why someone recommended your company to us. And since I’m also a frequent customer of your product and find it quite delicious, I called to ask if your company would be interested.”

“Oh, I understand. Please wait a moment, I will check with my leader.”

“OK.”

“...Sorry to have kept you waiting, Teacher Zhang. Our leader has informed me that our company has just taken an advertising deal with Central TV Department 1’s Friday drama slot. We don’t intend to do any advertising during a singing program for now since the market for variety programs isn’t too good currently.”

“Oh, what a shame then.”

He made a continuous seven or eight calls.

Zhang Ye only had one strategy, and that was to first tell them where he was calling from, then with a flurry of words, he would persuade them with praises first, such as saying how he felt that their company was the one who among others was the best or

telling them how this was a once in a lifetime opportunity that had arrived at their doorsteps and that they should really grab at the chance or else live to regret it. In any case, he just tried to sell them the title sponsorship using praises and talk of wasted opportunities.

However, not one of them responded positively!

When they heard that it was a variety program, everyone rejected his offer!

In the end, when Zhang Ye got tired of making calls, he gulped down a few glasses of water. He was quite angry at this outcome, thinking of what the hell was going on. Did anyone even know what sort of a program this was? This was The Voice! The reputable and famous program worldwide that was called The Voice! Back in Zhang Ye's previous world, the title sponsorship for The Voice was a sky-high figure which did not even need anyone to go around begging others to buy it. Without stepping out of the television station's door, the advertisers would make their interest known and try to outbid each other for the rights to the title sponsorship! But now? Zhang Ye's mouth was already worn out from all those calls but none of the companies were interested in buying the title sponsorship. Some of these companies even assumed Zhang Ye to be a scammer and hung up on the phone immediately. That made Zhang Ye not know whether to laugh or cry!

You fail to see the great product!

You people really don't consider the steamed bun stuffed with

sweetened bean paste to be food!

A program like The Voice that had conquered people's hearts all around the world was now in such a sorry state? But that was not surprising at all since there was no precedent of a program like this in this world. It wasn't his fault that the values of this world's singing programs were totally different from his previous world! The emergence of a new product was always going to face doubt and resistance since no one understood it well enough!

But what could be done now?

Sell it for cheap? That's not possible!

Even if everyone did not know the great value of being the title sponsor to The Voice, it did not mean that it had no value. Even if he had to hold it in his hands, Zhang Ye would not consider selling it for cheap. This would be disrespecting the hard work of his predecessors. But if he had to sell it for cheap, he would sell it to someone he knew.

Someone he knew?

Oh, right!

Zhang Ye suddenly thought of a person. Wu Mo! Now that was really someone he knew well, what with Wu Mo being Wu Zeqing's nephew as well as the CEO of the Brain Gold company!

Zhang Ye's eyes lit up as he immediately grabbed his phone back from Chenchen, saying, "Stop playing."

Chenchen would not have any of it and said, "Zhang Ye, give it back."

"Uncle has some serious work to do now." Zhang Ye scrolled to Wu Mo's contact in his contacts and gave him a call.

Du du du. It only took three rings before Wu Mo's spirited voice came from the other end: "Hahaha, Brother Zhang! My benefactor's has called!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "CEO Wu, what are you busy with?"

Wu Mo said happily: "Nothing, I'm just lazing around at home."

"Whoa, you're that free? That's good then. Let's go out for a drink, I have something that I need to discuss with you." As Zhang Ye was considerably close to him, it was also easy for him to talk to Wu Mo.

Wu Mo did not hesitate and said: "Sure, I'll pick you up."

Zhang Ye said: "But you're a tycoon worth billions. How would that be suitable?"

Wu Mo said, "Brother Zhang, aren't you making me feel

disgraceful now? Without your endorsement and advertisement, would your brother be here today? I will go pick you up, that is a must. It has been a while since we've met and I also intended to go look for you anyway!"

"Fine then. So shall we meet at the entrance of Central TV Tower?" Zhang Ye asked.

"Oh, I just remembered. You've gone to work at Central TV now. Sure then, I'll be there in twenty minutes." Wu Mo ended the call after he said that.

When Zhang Ye put down his cell phone, he was already preparing his speech for later. He should have really thought of Wu Mo earlier. Ever since that viral advertisement, Brain Gold's sales figures had risen like it was attached to the top of a launched rocket. It went from being an enterprise on the verge of bankruptcy to becoming the market leader of health products. It was rumored that the management of Wu Mo's company had an internal target to be listed at the end of two years. With the business developing at such a rapid pace, Wu Mo's net worth was now staggering, though Zhang Ye did not know what the exact figure was. If Wu Mo bought the title sponsorship, it would first solve Zhang Ye's pressing problems of getting additional funding, and second, ensure that the benefits of the deal would not be given to any other outsiders. It would allow Brain Gold to ride on the coattails of The Voice's imminent rise and certainly allow its sales to be increased several fold more. As Wu Zeqing's unpublicized boyfriend, there was no reason not to take care and look out for her nephew.

After calming Chenchen down, Zhang Ye got Ha Qiqi to help him look after her and went out to meet with Wu Mo.

Underneath the tower.

The two of them met up.

“Brother Zhang.”

“CEO Wu, it looks like you’ve been enjoying life?”

“Hai, I’ve been eating too much lately.”

“Come, let’s get in the car to talk.”

“Sure, let’s find a coffee house.”

After getting into Wu Mo’s new luxury car he had swapped to recently, they drove off.

Wu Mo spoke as he drove, “What did you want to tell me about?”

“Well, let me be direct with you then.” Zhang Ye laughed a little and continued, “I don’t know how familiar you are with the title sponsorship and related advertising opportunities on television

programs.”

Wu Mo blinked and said, “Title sponsorship? How could I not know about that? Didn’t the success of our Brain Gold product happen all because of the extensive advertising campaign?”

Zhang Ye said, “Then it will be easier to explain.”

Wu Mo heartily asked, “What about it? Your new program is seeking a title sponsor? Then that won’t be a problem at all. How much is it? I just need a word from you. My Brother Zhang’s program definitely won’t go wrong!”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “Don’t promise me too soon. I suggest you listen to what I have to say first. Yes, I am thinking of roping you in to join as the title sponsor, but my program’s title sponsorship won’t be sold for anything less than 100 million RMB.”

Screeeech!

The car came to a screeching halt by the side of the road!

Wu Mo asked dumbfounded, “What? Please say again?”

Zhang Ye cleared his throat and said, “100 million.”

Wu Mo was nearly close to tears when he spoke, “Brother Zhang,

I'm not well educated, so don't try to fool me. But what sort of program are you producing? Even if it's an advertisement during News Simulcast, it shouldn't cost 100 million, right? I think I saw some news last night about the program that you're doing for Central TV Department 1. It's a singing program? I didn't remember incorrectly, right?"

Zhang Ye nodded and remarked, "You're right."

Wu Mo said, "But the market for singing programs is in a downturn at the moment, isn't it? As far as I know, the exclusive title sponsorships are generally in the range of 10 to 20 million RMB at most. But of course, I know that your program will surely be different from theirs. They have got nothing on you, so I think that 30 million RMB should already be a ballpark figure."

Zhang Ye shook his head and said, "That's far from it."

Wu Mo was still extremely trusting of Zhang Ye, so he stated, "I'm sure you wouldn't say that without a reason. Why don't you tell me what the situation is like instead?"

Zhang Ye explained, "I won't touch on the program's technicalities and the market trend issues for now since even industry insiders do not seem to grasp that fully, let alone you. But what I can tell you right now is that this program that no one has any expectations of will gain a viewership rating that you cannot even begin to imagine. If you become the title sponsor of this program, I can assure you that, even with 200 million, you would not be making a loss!"

Wu Mo asked, “What sort of a viewership rating are we talking about?”

Zhang Ye said, “Think big.”

Wu Mo said, “0.9%?”

Zhang Ye said, “Even bigger.”

Wu Mo said, “1.3%?”

Zhang Ye said, “You can up that a bit more.”

After holding it in for a long time, Wu Mo daringly said, “Could it be 1.6%?”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “If I told you that the figure of 1.6% is just for the start, would you believe it?”

Chapter 639 – The Voice’s Astronomical Title Sponsorship Fee!

Ah?

For a start?

The 1.6% viewership ratings is just the starting figure?

Wu Mo was stunned in astonishment, “How can a singing talent show program have that high of a viewership rating? In the past two years alone, I believe that none of them has garnered more than 1% of the viewership ratings before?

Zhang Ye shrugged and said, “The key here is that my program has the potential to have such a high viewership rating. What you should be aware of here is that if a program can hit 1.6% and above, it will generate a different effect and discussion for its advertisers. Compared to those programs with only 0.5%, it is definitely not an effect that can be combined by stacking them together, but something that is exponentially better. So if we calculate it this way, based on three singing programs that have viewership ratings of 0.5% each, their total title sponsorship fees should be around the region of about 50 million RMB. With that, even if I were to double the final figure, I don’t think I’m asking for too much, am I?”

Wu Mo nodded and said, “If you calculate it that way, then it’s really not a lot, but...”

Zhang Ye did not wait for him to finish, but added on, “The problem right now is that the program has not even started airing yet, so there’re no viewership ratings or market response data available. Even if I were to persuade you with all that I have, it is still only my words and perspective that you can take. Other people might perceive what I say to them as boasting or touting my own program’s potential, so choose not to believe me. That’s why it is useless for me to talk too much with them. If they don’t wish to believe me, they will not believe me.”

This was also the current embarrassing state of Zhang Ye and The Voice. If others did not believe him or chose not to buy the title sponsorship, what could he do about it? He couldn’t possibly hold it and just wait for the program to start broadcasting first, right? But without the title sponsorship fee, how would he be able to produce the program? There was no way it would make it to broadcasting, so this was a dead-end situation. Everything depended on this.

Wu Mo was silent.

Zhang Ye smiled and stated, “But CEO Wu, you should know what kind of a person I am. When it comes my work, I never boast about what I can achieve. If I claim that I can make the program hit that viewership rating, then I can definitely do so and it won’t get any lower than that, only higher. Today’s not the first day you’ve known me. We’ve even worked together for some time now, so whether or not there’s any qualifications to my claims, I’m sure you know better than anyone.”

Wu Mo agreed, “We did more than just work together. Everyone

outside says that I had the vision and luck to have met Zhang Ye and was so brave to have used that brainwashing advertisement. But only myself and some of my company's internal staff know that I didn't have the courage or vision they claimed. If it were not for you assuring me at that time that this advertisement would surely save my company, if not for your constant persuasion to force me to use it and even offering to return the endorsement fees if it failed, then I wouldn't be here today enjoying the success of the Brain Gold product. That was why when a few people suggested in a recent company meeting to change the Brain Gold advertisement after it ran for some time, I only responded to them with this: 'Zhang Ye has said before that the Brain Gold advertisement could be used for another 10 years without change. When it comes to advertisements, I only believe in Zhang Ye and no one else!'"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

Wu Mo glanced at him and asked, "Can I believe in you as well this time?"

Zhang Ye explained, "You can rest assured. The core of the program is the voice, to allow singers to return to their basics in the music indus—"

Wu Mo said, "Don't explain to me the technicalities of the program. Just give me your word."

Zhang Ye pondered for a moment before saying firmly, "You can fully put your trust in me. On this matter, I would never cheat you. Even if I were to cheat someone else, I would not do it to you." He

was speaking the truth, as after all, if he cheated Wu Zeqing's nephew, his girlfriend would surely come looking for him. "I will also be honest with you here because we're friends. The reason that the title sponsorship fee costs 100 million RMB is because our program team requires the money urgently to start production while Central TV is being very conservative with the budget and did not approve of our request to increase the funding. It ended up with me having to find my own ways to get more production budget. If we did not lack any money, even if you offered us 50 million for the title sponsorship fee right now, I would not say anything about it. Of course, I'll add that if you really buy it from us at 100 million, this money would definitely still be worth it. With more money, we can increase the quality of the program and the viewership ratings will also be better, which would also serve your advertising much better too. On top of that, your company will surely claim this year's label of title sponsorship king, so that would benefit your group in terms of the advertising effect too."

Having listened to everything, Wu Mo smiled and acknowledged, "Alright then, I will listen to you on the matters of advertising. Not only are you my spokesman for the Brain Gold advertisement, you're also our company's advertising planner and consultant. If it's 100 million, so be it! When can we sign the contract? Why don't you go get it ready and I will sign it anytime!"

Seeing him agree so readily, Zhang Ye began to feel a little embarrassed. He said, "Why don't you think about it some more first?"

Wu Mo gave a wave of his hands and said, "There's no need to consider. To be honest, the money that the company has now was only earned because of your advertisement campaign. If I think of

it that way, I don't feel any pinch at all no matter how much you want us to invest.”

Zhang Ye smiled cheerfully and stated, “In a month's time, not only will you not feel the pinch, you'll feel a cramp from your mouth instead.”

Wu Mo wondered, “Cramp from my mouth because?”

Zhang Ye quipped, “—of smiling too much!”

“Haha!” Wu Mo laughed heartily and said, “Now that you've put it like that, I am rather looking forward to seeing the results. Honestly, with the explosion in sales for our Brain Gold product the past few months, it has really made us a lot of money without needing to do much and I have nothing to worry about at all. But it's also true that a few months have gone by now, and when we checked our market statistics, it showed that even though sales are still strong, the growth has already tapered off and are starting to slow. At most, during any holiday, the figures would increase a little more, so our company is also finding another way to increase our advertising efforts, which was why we had that meeting last time and discussed whether we wanted to change the Brain Gold advertisement which I rejected. But now—having bought the title sponsorship to your new program, although the price is truly still a big shock to me, after the shock wears off—I have a sense of stability which I can't explain. I am sure my Brother Zhang's program will be good, so after it gets broadcast, with the popularity of the program, it will surely let our Brain Gold product get even more popular again. Of all that, I'm pretty confident!”

Zhang Ye reached out his hand and said, “Then may I thank you for your trust in me and let’s have a happy partnership?”

“To a happy partnership!” Wu Mo also played along and reached out his hand to shake Zhang Ye’s hand.

With Zhang Ye’s constantly rising popularity, the number of people who doubted him also increased as more people started to learn of him. But at the same time, the number of people who believed in him also rose, and at a greater rate than those who doubted him!

Like this scene which had just played out, even when Wu Mo had only found out about the program called The Voice of China today, without knowing the specifics of it or asking about the production timeline, with just Zhang Ye’s reputation and the hallmark of his name, Wu Mo dared to agree to such an astronomical sponsorship fee and sealed the deal with just a handshake! From this alone, it could be seen just how strong the brand of Zhang Ye had become!

Chapter 640 – Coaches Invited To Join!

Midday.

At a famous tripe shop in the city, Zhang Ye was wearing his sunglasses while Wu Mo was in his suit as the two of them walked out from the restaurant with their hands rubbing their bellies.

Wu Mo laughed and said, “We’ve just sealed a 100 million RMB deal and yet we only had 45 RMB worth of tripe and flatbread for lunch?”

“Isn’t it better to have what you love to eat rather than what is good to eat?” Zhang Ye commented, feeling satisfied by the meal.

“Now that’s true.” Wu Mo remarked, “This is exactly what I love eating.”

Zhang Ye said, “Alright then, when I get back later, I will get someone to prepare the contract and send it over.”

Wu Mo opened his car door. “Sure, let’s go then. Do you need me to send you back?”

Zhang Ye waved him off. “I won’t bother you, I still have some work to handle. This title sponsorship fee has given me some pressure now, so I will need to quickly settle the program’s guest coaches and invite a few big shots over or else the show can’t be carried. Only then will it do justice to your 100 million RMB title

sponsorship fee.”

Wu Mo said just before he left, “Then I’ll leave the advertisement copy to you as well?”

“No problem.” Zhang Ye agreed immediately. “I’ll get it done before the recording of the show. At that time, all you need to do is to add a slogan placement like ‘Drink Brain Gold, Support The Voice!’ in your advertisements. We will do a cross promotion of the product and the show, but let’s talk about the details at a later date.”

Wu Mo said, “OK then.”

To know where a new program ranked, the most practical way to assess it was to take a look at the investment amount.

If 10 million was invested? Then it was just a normal-sized production.

If 20 million was invested? It should be a mid-sized production.

If 30 or 40 million was invested? Then it would be a large-scale production.

But if the investment was over 100 million? Then surely it would be called a mega-scale production! In this world, much less singing talent shows, even other types of variety shows that had 100 million RMB in investments were unheard of. No television

stations dared to play it so big and no teams would risk such an amount of money. After all, the common figure for title sponsorship fees were around the region of 10 to 20 million RMB. Any higher than that and the investment sum would not be earned back at all as the return on investment was not proportional. So for any television programs that had an investment of 30 to 40 million RMB, they would already be considered as having a large production budget.

But as Zhang Ye was going for broke this time, he knew that the production costs for The Voice would not be any less than 80 million RMB. Now that the title sponsor was settled, Zhang Ye anticipated the final product even more. He was prepared to spend all of the 120 million RMB budget so that the program would not fall short. He was going to place everything he had into it to create a mega-scale singing talent show!

Equipment? They must be the top-tier ones!

The stage? It must have the best design!

Promotions? They needed the best time slots!

Contestants? They would be given the best treatment and accommodations!

As for the guest coaches...they had to be the most elite in the industry, of course!

Wu Mo had just left when Zhang Ye's cell phone rang. The caller ID indicated it was from his own office. Needless to say, the only person who would dare to use the telephone in his office would be Chenchen. It wasn't like any of the staff would dare to do so.

"Hello?"

"Zhang Ye."

"Chenchen."

"When are you coming back?"

"I'm working outside now, so I'll only be back after noon. Oh yes, I nearly forgot about you. Get Auntie Qiqi to take you to the cafeteria for lunch. Don't wait for me."

"—OK."

"Be obedient while you're at the office."

"Understood."

Having comforted Chenchen, Zhang Ye eagerly rubbed his hands together as several faces appeared in his mind. He was not prepared to go back to work yet. With a boost in the program's funds, he was much more emboldened and surely would have to get things done now. If he could settle the guest coaches and get

them to join the show, then the pre-production tasks were more or less completed, and his mission would also basically be done.

Who to find?

Who was most suitable?

An average celebrity would surely not do. If they were not professional singers, it wouldn't work either.

On this front, Zhang Ye had really given it some thought. When he determined that he was going to do The Voice, he had some ideas and thoughts about the guest coaches. But since they did not have enough funds earlier, he did not take any action yet. Now that he had so much more to work with, Zhang Ye could do what others did not dare, and even make it a reality. For example, inviting celebrities others could not convince or had no money to invite!

In this way, he made the first call.

Zhang Xia: the famous songstress of China who had been awarded the country's highest honor in singing. Many people grew up listening to Grandma Zhang Xia's songs as she was from the first generation of singers in China. Other than her reputation and qualifications, even though the youngsters these days did not consider her their favorite artist, there were no doubt about her status and ability in the singing industry. She has been singing all her life and just comparing the basics of singing, Grandma Zhang could outdo all of those Heavenly Kings and Queens. Regarding

how to use her voice, tonal adjustment, and understanding of music, Grandma Zhang had the most experience. The key was that she could handle singing different genres other than bel canto¹, as shown when she performed the “Woman Flower” written for her and Zhang Yuanqi by Zhang Ye. Based on her relationship with Zhang Ye, and taking everything into consideration, it felt like Zhang Ye’s The Voice of China would definitely need to reserve a place for Grandma Zhang!

Du du.

Du du.

The call connected.

“Little Zhang?” Zhang Xia answered the call. He could hear the sound of a fan, probably because she was cooking. She said, “Wait a minute, let me turn off the heat, I was just cooking.”

A moment later.

Zhang Xia laughed, “What’s the matter, Little Zhang?”

Zhang Ye said, “Why don’t you have your meal first and I’ll call back later?”

“You can go ahead, I’m not in a rush to eat,” Zhang Xia replied in a friendly tone.

And so, Zhang Ye explained, “Grandma Zhang, I am currently working with Central TV Department 1 and making a program called The Voice of China.”

“I’ve heard about that, I saw it on the news.” Zhang Xia said, “I was still thinking of taking some time to call you these few days. Are you really serious about creating a talent show that is only focused on the contestants’ voices?”

“Yes, what do you think of it?” Zhang Ye asked.

Zhang Xia laughed a little before responding, “I think it’s a good idea. Disregarding the specific audience base and the viewership ratings, at least I think that this program should be quite meaningful. Compared to all those other singing talent shows, there’s a much more positive energy in it and feels much healthier for the industry, so you should do it. I’ll support you for sure. Don’t listen to what others say.”

Zhang Ye was cheered up and said, “That was what I wanted to hear from you, Grandma Zhang, but don’t just use your words to support me.”

Zhang Xia was a little taken aback as she was just casually remarking on the issue. She did not expect Zhang Ye to take it so seriously, so she asked, “Hur hur, then how should I support you? Help you by posting on Weibo? Or help you to promote the program within the industry? Or have you laid eyes on one of my disciples? You would like me to get a few of them to appear on your

program?”

Zhang Ye said, “That’s not it at all. What I wish for is for you to join The Voice of China as one of the four guest coaches. Are you able to fit it into your schedule?”

Zhang Xia sounded very surprised at this. “Oh? Why are you inviting me? My reputation isn’t that great and can’t be compared to those younger singers these days. Their fans easily number in the tens of millions. Isn’t the program that you’re making meant to reach out to the younger crowd? The contestants would mainly be involved in pop music, right?”

Zhang Ye said, “Your reputation isn’t that great? How many people from our generation do not know about you? The parents and relatives of the people from our generation mostly grew up listening to your songs too. If you say your name is not well-known, then I don’t suppose that there are any big names at all in the whole of China. As for the music, our program is not only focused on pop music. The program welcomes all kinds of contestants who dabble in any kind of musical style. Besides, I’ve said that our program only focuses on the voice, so we naturally also need a coach who is very experienced with vocals and singing techniques on our side. You’ve been singing most of your life and I really can’t think of anyone who is more suitable than you for this role!”

Zhang Xia forced a laugh. “But I’m already so old and my children have been asking me to retire. Right now, the only thing that I can’t put down is singing, but I’ve already let go of all professional work schedules since a long time ago. I won’t hide this

from you. Just last month and at the end of last year, there were two singing programs that approached me to join them as well, but I rejected them. Regarding such television variety shows and talent shows, I have a certain resistance of them.”

Zhang Ye said, “Heh, Grandma Zhang, you’re really not being true to your words. Didn’t you just say that my new program is very meaningful and that you would support me? But now in the next instant, you’re being resistant to the idea already? You told me you were unable to put down singing, and our program is made exactly to let people go back to the roots of singing. The direction of this program does not conflict with your beliefs. If you join us, you will be helping the newcomers by discovering and training a group of people who have been forgotten or ignored but have good singing abilities. This is a job that’s benevolent beyond measure since you’ll be grooming the future talents of the singing industry.”

Zhang Xia: “...”

Zhang Ye lauded, “If you don’t take up this role, then we young ones will surely not be qualified either. In the field of music, your experience is the most valuable treasure to us. Without you paving the way for the later generation, they could easily take the wrong path or direction.”

Hearing that, Zhang Xia was indeed feeling rather flattered. “Child, you have quite the glib tongue.”

Zhang Ye declared, “Grandma Zhang, as the executive director of The Voice of China, I would like to once again formally invite you

to join us.”

After pondering for a few seconds, Zhang Xia answered, “You’ve already laid it on me quite thick, so I don’t think I can reject you, right? Alright then, I promise you that I will join your program as a guest coach.”

Zhang Ye happily replied, “That’s really good news.”

Zhang Xia said, “But I want to say this beforehand. If there’re any fixed results or a designated champion, I will not want to take part in it. I will just listen to the vocals and say whatever needs to be said.”

“To be honest with you, Grandma Zhang, that is exactly what I want from you. I give you my word that, as long as I helm the program team, there will absolutely be no underhanded results fixing! If I find out that it happens, then I will deal with them one by one! There will be no room for discussion!” Zhang Ye promised her.

Zhang Xia was very satisfied with that. She said, “That’s better.”

Suddenly, Zhang Ye thought of something. “Oh yes, we have yet to discuss the joining payment...”

“I’ll leave that to you.” Zhang Xia sounded indifferent to this.

But the more someone put it this way, the more Zhang Ye was

unwilling to leave it unspoken. He said, “How much did the two programs that approached you before offer to you?”

Zhang Xia replied, “Several million I guess, I’m not exactly sure either.”

Zhang Ye said, “They wanted to invite you with just a few million? Then they were really insincere in their offer. How about this Grandma Zhang, we will offer you a joining payment of 10 million RMB. What do you think?”

Zhang Xia said, “Are you taking me to be Yuanqi? Why would I need that much?”

Zhang Ye laughed and noted, “You’re being too modest.”

“That won’t do, that won’t do.” Because of their friendship from the song “Woman Flower,” Zhang Xia had never treated Zhang Ye as an outsider. “A few million is enough. Even the other singing talent shows are only offering that amount for their joining payment, yet you are thinking of giving 10 million? I know that Central TV is notoriously stingy, so why are they being so generous this time?”

Zhang Ye said, “They are them, I am me. The funding this time was provided by me. I’m also in charge of the program, so all the decisions will be made by me. It’s settled then, 10 million will be your joining payment. I will get someone to prepare the contract later. Grandma Zhang, let’s keep our personal relationship personal and business as business. That’s that then.”

Chapter 641 – Guest Coaches List!

In the afternoon.

After ending Grandma Zhang's call, Zhang Ye made a few calls in a row after that. Through the management agency, he found the agent before finally reaching the intended party after much trouble. After he made the intention of the call clear, Zhang Ye arranged to meet up with the person and drove over immediately.

In a district.

In a villa.

He followed the address and found his way here. Upon arrival, he saw the doors to the villa already opened and the male and female owners had both spotted Zhang Ye approaching. They came out immediately to welcome him.

“Teacher Zhang.” The man waved at him.

The woman smiled and said, “We were still thinking of suggesting a more centralized place to meet. Was it hard to find this place?”

Zhang Ye smiled and shook their hands. He said, “It's best to discuss this in the privacy of your home since it is easier to speak there. There are people everywhere outside and it's not so convenient to talk about business. Once I had a meeting with

someone at a coffee house and the staff and guests there were all busy taking pictures and creating a constant shutter sound with their cameras. Some of the young people were even more aggressive, coming up to our table to take photos of me up close. That really overwhelmed me, so how do you suppose we can talk about any business there at all?”

The man laughed and said, “Teacher Zhang, please come in.’

The three of them went into the villa.

The woman went to the kitchen and came out with some tea. “Old Chen and I have both heard of Zhang Ye’s reputable name so much and we’ve always been paying attention to your news. I really like the songs you wrote and have been hoping to meet you so that we could talk.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Me too. The Heroic Couple of the singing industry—I’ve heard about the both of you for a long time now.”

The man was taken aback and asked, “What is the Heroic Couple?”

The woman laughed, “We even have such a nickname? Where did it come from?”

Zhang Ye got a little nervous, knowing that it was a slip of tongue. There was no such thing as The Return of the Condor

Heroes in this world, so he quickly added, “It’s just a description for an ideal couple, ha ha.”

The man said with a smile, “What ideal? We also argue on a daily basis.”

Zhang Ye said, “Oh, but that’s not how they said it on television!”

The man laughed heartily and replied, “If it’s a television program, of course it will be slightly exaggerated to make us sound better. In our daily lives, which couple does not have their quarrels?”

The woman added, “If the argument gets too heated, we might even get physical.”

If it were with other industry outsiders or the media, they would surely not say that much. However, since Zhang Ye was also an industry insider and the three of them were similar in popularity with all of them being B-listers, together with the fact that they had no conflict of interests, their conversation was naturally also much more lighthearted.

The man was Chen Guang. He was in his early thirties.

The woman was Fan Wenli. She was thirty years old exactly.

They were both top singers in the country and were ranked a little higher than Zhang Ye on the Celebrity Rankings Index. One

was in the middle of the B-list rankings while the other was in the lower half of the B-list rankings, making them look like they were just average celebrities. However, these two people were considered top singers in the singing industry. As comparison, when Heavenly Queen Zhang Yuanqi was at her lowest point in terms of record sales, she was estimated to be selling two-thirds of what Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were. Citing either one of them as an example, they could easily be labeled top singers in the singing industry. But of course, when they were at their lowest point in record sales, they also lagged far behind Zhang Yuanqi. After all, a Heavenly Queen was still a Heavenly Queen and even at that lowest point, her fanbase was still on a different level. This also clearly explained the problem here.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were only focused on their music careers and hardly ever crossed over to the film and television drama industries. If the Celebrity Rankings Index excluded those movies stars and hosts, and the rankings were only based on the music industry alone, then the two of them would surely be ranked in the top 20. They could be considered as B-listers in the entertainment circle but A-listers in the music industry! This was also the reason why Zhang Ye was paying them a visit today after pondering for a long time. Because the two of them were the most professional of singers, their image also aligned with The Voice. Actually, even if he found an A-lister celebrity who was primarily an movie actor and secondarily a singer, it would still be alright. But Zhang Ye felt that would make the selections a bit incomplete. A stage where vocals were the main feature would surely need to focus on that point. So whether it be the stage, the contestants, or the guest coaches, he knew he needed the most reputable singers from the music industry and not just someone who was highly rated in the overall entertainment industry. These two things were totally different!

After chatting for a long while, Zhang Ye had gotten familiar with them.

Only then did Zhang Ye touch on the topic. He said, “Regarding my invitation over the phone earlier, what do you think?”

Chen Guang looked at his wife then said to Zhang Ye, “Actually, I specifically went online to do some research on it. A program that does not care about looks and only focuses on vocals—I get the feeling that it’s just a gimmick, isn’t it?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yes, it is a gimmick, but not the type of gimmick you’re thinking of. What I want is to make a most professional singing program. That’s no lie. The contestants we want are also not limited only to those who have the looks or stage presence. As long as they can sing well, I want them all.”

Chen Guang sighed, “The concept of this program is good, at least. That’s something I agree with.”

Beside them, Fan Wenli laughed and said, “Yes, if only you’d encountered such a program back then, you wouldn’t have had to toil so hard for five full years. You would’ve gotten very popular early on.”

Fan Wenli was very beautiful and was a singer who overall had good looks, a good demeanor, and a good voice. However, Chen Guang’s looks could only pass as so-so. He didn’t look outstanding and even had some pockmarks on his lower left cheek from past

acne. This was why Chen Guang had a very difficult time when he debuted. It wasn't until recently that his singing career took off due to his determination and some lucky opportunities, helping him get accepted by everyone. Now that his popularity was soaring, Chen Guang was finally able to reap the fruits of the labor he had put in all these years.

Chen Guang was laughing and sighing at the same time. "My singing career path can only be described as extremely arduous. I've easily put in more effort than others by ten or a hundred fold before I was able to stand at the same level as some of them. Other people would find it difficult to relate to this experience of mine."

Zhang Ye said, "I do understand it."

Zhang Ye, too, was not someone who had good looks.

Chen Guang took a look at him and said happily, "How can we be compared? You have the eloquence, literary, and math talent, and even musical talent, so don't compare yourself to me. With my looks, I had to walk this entertainment industry's career path with only one leg. Those who were blessed with good looks could be described as walking down it with two legs, but for you, Zhang Ye, you have been walking down it with ten legs! Even those pretty boys from Korea could not compare to you, so your situation is totally different from mine, hur hur."

Zhang Ye said, "Brother Chen, you're really praising me too much. Usually, the strategy is to praise first before attacking, so does that mean that you're going to reject my invitation? If that's the case, then I won't have any other people I can approach. Sister

Fan and you are the most suitable coach candidates I can think of.”

Fan Wenli said, “May I ask who else will be joining?”

Zhang Ye answered, “I’ve already confirmed one coach: Grandma Zhang Xia.”

Chen Guang was stunned. “Grandma Zhang? She’s a great artist and a veteran of the music scene. No one can match her soprano, but isn’t Grandma Zhang already half retired? I’ve also never heard of Grandma Zhang ever participating in any variety programs, so how did you manage to invite her?”

“Grandma Zhang and I have a bit of a friendship, so you could say that she gave me a little bit of face this time,” Zhang Ye explained.

Chen Guang thought about it for a moment and then looked at his wife. “What’s your opinion about this?”

Fan Wenli shrugged. “Whatever you decide, I’ll go along with it.”

Chen Guang said, “I think this will be good opportunity and I’m really interested in such a program as well.”

“Then why don’t we discuss the joining payment?” Fan Wenli looked at Zhang Ye and said.

Zhang Ye immediately said, “It will be a general contract for a

duration of up to three months. Of course, before the scheduled recording of the main program itself, we also need the both of you to accommodate our program team's promotional and other related activities as well as endorsements that are related to the program, all of which will be covered under the joining payment and not additionally payable. But if it has to do with endorsements outside of the program or extended promotional activities, then the relevant fees will also be paid out according to the clauses of the contract. We can always discuss that at a later time."

Chen Guang grunted his understanding.

"As for the joining payment," Zhang Ye smiled and said, "What I can say is that it will surely be the highest in the industry, especially when it involves two heavyweight coaches like the two of you. It wouldn't be good if we paid too little."

It was easy to speak to Grandma Zhang since they had a friendship, and more importantly, she did not really care too much for these contracts. But for others, the joining payment was surely the most important factor. Money always came first, so if it wasn't agreed upon, even if they felt that your program was good, it wouldn't matter at all. Besides, Zhang Ye already intended to produce such a mega-scale talent show, so he wasn't afraid to spend. He knew that however much he spent, it would surely be worth it.

Zhang Ye paused for a moment, and then said, "For the two of you, what if I offered each one 10 million RMB as the joining payment?"

Chen Guang's eyes moved.

Fan Wenli was also surprised for a bit.

Zhang Ye added, "How does that sound?"

The couple looked at each other for a moment before Chen Guang said, "I'm really unable to reject an offer like that." He had only ever participated as a guest on a talent show once before—two years ago—and that program had only paid him 4 million as the joining payment. Although back then, he wasn't as famous as he was now and inflation wasn't high either. But as an industry insider, Chen Guang knew that the current market was not as good as that time either. The market for talent shows was in a downturn with every television station lowering the guest joining pay, yet Zhang Ye offered the two of them a total of 20 million in joining pay. That was already a big show of sincerity. If it were any other program approaching them, he believed they wouldn't have even offered them half of what Zhang Ye had!

Zhang Ye stood up and put his hand out. "So, let's have a happy partnership?"

"To a happy partnership!" Fan Wenli and Chen Guang both stuck out their hands to shake Zhang Ye's hand in response.

With the agreements made, the only thing left was just to sign the contract at a later date.

Leaving the villa, Zhang Ye did not have Chen Guang and his wife see him out. He casually strolled toward the district as he took out his phone and scrolled through his contacts.

Out of four coaches, three were already settled!

He was finally down to looking for the last coach!

But this last candidate was also the most difficult to convince. With such a huge reputation, it was someone that Zhang Ye had to convince no matter what, for the sake of The Voice. But he knew that it would be very difficult as well, and did not hold out much hope. He left this candidate as the final one to contact as he was ready for a protracted battle. He knew of the importance of this person for The Voice since a mega-scale singing talent show should unquestionably be fronted by an S-list, big shot celebrity. Only then would the entire setup look grand, leaving the audience screaming and helping to drum up the promotions for the opener of The Voice. This person would eventually serve as the main attraction for the program!

Who would it be?

Who could hold up the entire panel of coaches and represent them for The Voice?

There was already no suspense to the answer—it had to be the Heavenly Queen, Zhang Yuanqi!

Perfect looks, a perfect body, a perfect voice, and she even had the largest fanbase in the whole of China. Other than her, no one else could step up to this role!

In Zhang Ye's previous world, The Voice was lavishly decked out, from the stage to the equipment, contestants to the coaches. Zhang Ye was also aiming to achieve that right now. To avoid any accidents and a noncompliance situation when he brought over the program to this world, he needed to make sure that he laid out all the proper groundwork so that this world-class program would be restored in its full glory. That was the reason why he needed such a strong lineup for the program's coaches. It needed to at least be on par, or surpass, his previous world's version of The Voice of China!

Old Zhang must definitely be convinced to join!

But how should he do it?

A Heavenly Queen was not simply invited with just a snap of the fingers!

Right now, Zhang Yuanqi's focus was on releasing a music album, holding concerts, or taking parts in movie, and was basically not planning to participate in any recordings for television programs. As there was a market downturn presently, the programs did not pay well and tended to take too long to finish recording, only to end up getting very average viewership ratings, which could also be described as an "unable to make ends meet" situation. These were the reasons why any genuine Heavenly Kings

and Queens or even A-listers were taking part in fewer and fewer television talent shows. A normal variety or interview program was still alright since those would only take a day or just several hours to record. But a talent show was different. Beginning with the auditions and moving to the round of 16, then the quarterfinals and semi-finals, etc, the entire process was too lengthy. The big shot celebrities who did not lack any job offers couldn't possibly want to waste their time on such shows.

So how would he try to convince her?

Zhang Ye typed and retyped his words before finally sending out a very long text message to her. He made an introduction of his program and briefly explained the mechanics and format to Old Zhang.

Di di.

Old Zhang replied: "Not interested."

Zhang Ye was speechless but replied: "Consider it for a moment. You can also tell me the joining payment you're looking at."

Old Zhang: "Too many activities, no time."

Zhang Ye: "It's not like I need you to be here at Central TV every day for 24 hours to do the recording. It's only a few days and we're also willing to accommodate your schedule to record the program. If you have something on, then we can always record it later and

will surely wait for you.”

Old Zhang: “Look for someone else.”

Zhang Ye replied angrily: “Old Zhang, you’re really ungrateful. My new program has just started production and needs some support, so you should really try to help me out here no matter what. Hurry up and agree, otherwise, don’t expect me to write any songs for you in the future.”

Old Zhang: “What good songs do you have?? Send them over.”

Zhang Ye: “I don’t have any now, so let’s talk about the program first.”

Old Zhang: “Even if I did state a joining payment, Central TV would not be able to afford it.”

Zhang Ye: “If you don’t state it, how would you know that I am unable to afford it?”

After about five minutes or so, Zhang Yuanqi finally replied: “The lowest I can accept is 40 million, along with two songs from you.”

Zhang Ye: “One song.”

Old Zhang: “Two songs.”

Zhang Ye: “One means one, I don’t have more.”

Old Zhang: “.....Fine.”

Zhang Ye decisively said: “Deal! It’s settled then!”

Old Zhang: “Are you sure that you can afford the joining payment of 40 million?”

Zhang Ye laughed loudly as he typed in his reply to her: “You don’t have to worry about that. Just wait for your money.”

Old Zhang: “OK, talk directly to my manager about the contract. Notify me in advance about the filming of the show and promotional trailers. Also, start thinking about the new song.”

“I won’t forget, do you think I would go back on my words for that?” Zhang Ye said.

It was settled!

He finally managed to get the Heavenly Queen to join the coaching panel for The Voice!

Was 40 million RMB a lot? To others, this might look like it was an astronomical amount, but for Zhang Ye, as long as it could help the program do well, it didn’t matter how much it was. Besides,

based on Zhang Yuanqi's status and popularity, as the person on top of the food chain that was the entertainment circle, if 40 million RMB was able to convince her to join the show, then it should not be seen as a business loss at all. At the minimum, even if other television stations offered 40 million RMB to Zhang Yuanqi to join their program, she would not agree to it. Those television stations were unable to produce and offer what Zhang Ye was able to give: a song. Old Zhang was not someone who would be moved by just anyone!

Everything was A-OK!

It was all settled!

The four generals have been fully assembled!!

Chapter 642 – Dissolving The Program Team?

Later that afternoon.

It was almost time to leave work.

At the program team office of The Voice, many of the staff who had been stationed at the recording site were back. They were gathered back here for a short meeting to update each other on the day's work and their progress.

“How's your progress?”

“The progress is a little slow and there aren't too many registrations from the public.”

“I couldn't settle my task either; the main issue still hinges on our offer being too low.”

“Assistant Director Zhang, are you able to spare us some funds from your side?”

“I can't, I don't have enough to use either. Teacher Zhang specifically instructed that the equipment had to be the best, and after my discussion with the vendors today, I am still lacking some funds. One of the machines went over the budget.”

“Ai, we’re really too poor.”

“I finally understand what ‘money makes the world go round’ means now!”

“I wonder if Teacher Zhang managed to pull in any sponsors over at his side.”

“We’re done for. Everyone has such bad opinions of our program and the stage isn’t even set up yet. When we have nothing to show for at all, who would even dare to sponsor our program?”

The colleagues were all sighing. At the beginning, when they arrived at this program team, they were all full of anticipation and looking forward to this Central TV Department 1’s new program which would be helmed by the legendary Zhang Ye. But who would have thought that they would be regretful after just one day of work? The strong support from Central TV Department 1 was gradually becoming just average support. With the audience not thinking much of it and the program team running out of money, they all felt that there was no longer any future for this program. Darkness lay ahead of them and they felt that if they continued on like this, the program team might even get dissolved before the program could be made.

Meanwhile.

A rumor had started internally at Central TV Department 1.

“Hey, did you hear?”

“What’s the matter?”

“The program team for The Voice is going to be dissolved.”

“Ah? Didn’t they just form the team recently?”

“They ran out of money, spending 20 million RMB on equipment purchases alone. That was all the station had given to them as funding, but now that they’re out of it, they can only sit and watch.”

“Would the station just leave them like that?”

“Of course the station wanted to do something about it. They were already planning to make a strong return to the variety genre of programs and did so by risking it with Zhang Ye’s employment. But I don’t suppose they had expected Zhang Ye to be so risky. Not mentioning the controversy behind the proposed program, but when the 20 million RMB was spent just like that on those equipment, how do you expect the station to give them anymore support? Who wouldn’t be fazed by seeing money being spent like that? Even Central TV Department 1 would not have that much spare cash for Zhang Ye to burn through like that. 20 million RMB worth of production costs is already several times more than many of our other programs, so I’m sure the station was already hesitant to approve the initial sum.”

“Oh, then this is going to be really interesting to watch.”

“Will Zhang Ye be finished even before the ship sinks?”

“The program really won’t go on as planned then?”

“Didn’t I already say? If we got Zhang Ye to join us, then Central TV Department 1 would not have a day of peace anymore? Now do you all see why? He’s only been here a day and such a situation has occurred.”

“It’s not a problem even if the audience is not too optimistic about the program. After all, he had so many programs that did not look promising before but still succeeded as a precedent, so even if the final product is not completed yet, it would still have been alright. But without money, the problem becomes real. If he can’t even invite any celebrity guests or dress up the stage, how can he make any program at all? It can’t even be produced and recorded for the audience to watch! Let’s just see how The Voice program team is going to solve this.”

Central TV Department 1’s staff were all discussing fervently in secret, not knowing who had heard about this news or where its source was. It resulted in the rumor intensifying, not only within Central TV Department 1, but also spreading to the other departments housed in Central TV Tower.

Half an hour later.

Zhang Ye came back. He walked into the tower.

Ding. The staff elevator door opened. By coincidence, Chen Ye, the host of Central TV's Spring Festival Gala who had been relegated from the B-list rankings by Zhang Ye, was just walking out of the elevator. He was going in the opposite direction of Zhang Ye.

Chen Ye was a little stunned.

Zhang Ye's expression did not change. He casually swept his eyes over him as he entered the elevator.

To bring it up, although these two had a heated scolding battle on the internet, this was actually their first time seeing each other in person. Chen Ye had a more pronounced reaction as he was, after all, the one who had lost his position to Zhang Ye. Furthermore, the Crossing Half of China to Sleep with You targeted at him by Zhang Ye and his fans had left him grossed out for several days, and became a joke that netizens laughed at for a while. Naturally, when he saw Zhang Ye, it stirred up his feelings quite a bit. But Zhang Ye did not feel anything. He saw Chen Ye? Then so be it. He still went about going where he needed to go and did not stop in his tracks for a moment.

The reason for their different reactions was mainly down to their different experiences. As a Central TV host of this level, Chen Ye was one of the station's pillars and had hosted the Spring Festival Gala before, so he could be mentioned as someone close to the top of the hosting world. He had a high status and hardly ever got into quarrels with anyone nor did he really have experience in such

matters. As a result, after the previous fearsome scolding battle with Zhang Ye, it left a mark in his memory, especially since he did not win the battle. But for Zhang Ye? This person was someone who got into trouble so very often and always found the time to scold or beat up someone. For him, those were just part of his daily life, so you could say that he was very used to such situations. Now that he was seeing Chen Ye in person for the first time, Zhang Ye did not show any special reaction to him either. There were really too many people he had offended.

They brushed past each other, but neither one bothered with the other.

There were also a few other people in the elevator, possibly colleagues or staff who knew Chen Ye. When they saw the situation, they also had strange looks on their faces. They followed Chen Ye out of the elevator.

One of them started speaking.

“I heard that The Voice is going to be canceled soon.”

“I heard so too.”

“The program team was only put together two days ago, and it’s going to get canceled so soon?”

“They were too ambitious. For program with a funding of 20 million, they wanted to make it into the standard of several tens of

millions more. When the funding couldn't be increased and the advertising deals didn't sell, the only out was to cancel it totally."

"Oh right, Teacher Chen, I heard that your program's title sponsor increased their bid?"

"Yes, it's a newly signed contract."

"Could you reveal to us what kind of a figure it is? Everyone's quite curious about it."

"Yea, Brother Chen, how much did you get?"

"Hur hur, there's nothing confidential about it. It sold for 38 million RMB."

"Woah, that's a new record."

"With the rise of the internet and the decline of the television market, there are fewer and fewer programs that can break 30 million RMB in title sponsorship fees, yet your program's sponsorship is almost at 40 million?"

"Yes, the contract's already been signed."

"Congratulations, Teacher Chen."

“How awesome! The program team I’m working for only managed 12 million RMB for the same thing. 38 million RMB, now that’s really an astronomical figure to us!”

Their conversation had inadvertently touched on that topic.

Inside the elevator, Zhang Ye could still hear what they were talking about. Even though the elevator doors had closed and he was separated from them by a large metallic door, the sound insulation wasn’t actually that good before the elevator started ascending. When Zhang Ye heard their conversation, he also wondered what they meant by the program team for The Voice was dissolving. Dissolved for what reason? And that title sponsorship fee they were talking about? How could 38 million RMB be called an astronomical figure?

Ding.

He reached his floor.

Zhang Ye walked back quickly to his own program team’s office. Before he could step inside, he already saw some faces etched with worry, as several people gathered around each other looking stunned.

Chenchen, sitting beside Ha Qiqi and playing games, apparently became aware and raised her head to see Zhang Ye walking in. The little kid got off from her chair and said with a sunken expression, “Zhang Ye, why are you only back at this time?”

Zhang Ye said, “Didn’t I already say that I had something to do?”

Chenchen was still not looking too happy, probably because she blamed Zhang Ye for not being around to take care of her.

“What’s the matter? You don’t know how to go to the toilet by yourself? Didn’t I tell you before that after you climb up onto the toilet, as long as you don’t sit too far back, you won’t fall in?” Zhang Ye went up to coax her a little and promised her that she would get more snacks and television time before she was satisfied and went back to playing her games.

As Chenchen walked away, Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo suddenly surrounded Zhang Ye altogether.

Zhang Zuo said, “Teacher Zhang, our program team is going to be dissolved!”

Ha Qiqi also said, “I heard from so from many of my friends too. I think it might be true.”

“Director Zhang, what should we do now?” Wu Yi was panicking. “Why don’t you go look for the director and have a few words with him? Help us to fight against that decision? We went to look for Brother Fu just now, but he wasn’t around.”

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, “Who did you all hear that from?”

A female editor said, “Everyone’s talking about it. There isn’t smoke without fire, so it was definitely said by someone up top.”

Zhang Ye had heard about this as well when he was taking the elevator up. Actually, he already knew that this was just a rumor. No matter how conservative or unreliable Central TV Department 1 was, they wouldn’t possibly cancel a program just two days after starting it. If the rumor were true, then that would truly have been most silly. Although Central TV Department 1 had some doubts about him, but with the program not produced yet and with his previous experience and results for all to see, even if Central TV Department 1 wanted to give up on him, they would only decide on that after seeing how *The Voice* performed after broadcasting. To cut their losses before anything was implemented? That was impossible! Zhang Ye knew that this was surely just a rumor that spread after someone had made a wild guess!

Everyone was just saying what they thought.

Zhang Ye pressed his hands together and spoke reassuringly, “Stop talking everyone. I need all of you to calm your minds. This matter is just a rumor, so please ignore it.”

Everyone stopped talking, but their eyes still showed signs of uncertainty. If it were purely just a rumor, then it would be fine, but the problem now was also that their program was out of funding and the station was very unsatisfied with the program and Zhang Ye’s handling of the funds. At this moment, when the staff were already very worried that the team would be dissolved, hearing such a rumor only made it feel more real. That was what led to this situation of panic now.

Seeing them in this way, Zhang Ye was angry and tickled at the same time. Was this bro so lacking in prestige? Didn't I already say that I would find a way to settle the money issue? Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Alright then, let me give everyone a piece of good news. This afternoon I went out for a bit and managed to confirm an exclusive title sponsor for our The Voice of China program!"

When Ha Qiqi heard this, she immediately beamed with delight and said, "You got a deal?"

Zhang Zuo also turned from worry to joy and said, "It's only been a few hours and you've already managed to pull in a title sponsor? Teacher Zhang really get things done! It must be because of your great reputation!"

A program that had not officially begun production and did not get much optimism from both industry insiders and the audience—without having any production movements or promotions since it was announced—was able to get a title sponsor? If this were anyone else or any other program team, that would surely be just as good as daydreaming! But Zhang Ye did it. This clearly showed the value of Teacher Zhang's face and reputation. No one else could do something like this!

Highlighting this with an analogy, it was the same as shooting a movie. If you were an average director with an average screenplay, it would be difficult to pull in investments whomever you approached. But if you were a famous, big shot director in the country—with all of your previous films getting several hundred

millions in box office earnings, and intended to shoot a new movie today—then even if you did not have a screenplay or proposal yet, as long as you announced that you wanted to make a movie, investors would still arrive in droves, offering to make investments into this project of yours! It was the same logic!

The key question right now was: how much was Zhang Ye's reputation valued at?

A male editor hurriedly asked, "Director Zhang, how much did we get?"

A female administrative staff member asked, "Yeah, Teacher Zhang, how much did we manage to get?"

Zhang Ye kept them in suspense. "Hur hur, guess."

A female editor made a bold wild guess and said, "20 million?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "Guess higher."

Higher than 20 million? Everyone was getting excited!

Zhang Zuo immediately said, "30 million?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said again, "Even higher than that."

Ha Qiqi took a deep breath before saying, “Could it be...35 million then?”

Zhang Ye said, “Still higher.”

Wu Yi said, “Could it be that it’s also 38 million? I heard that Teacher Chen Ye’s program has finalized their title sponsorship contract with a renewed fee of 38 million. That is already this year’s highest title sponsorship fee amount!”

Zhang Ye graciously said, “You can still add to that amount.”

What?

That’s still not enough??

Everyone was stunned. They said, “Could it be...could it be 40 million?”

When they mentioned the words “40 million,” their hearts shuddered. They couldn’t help it either, since in their minds, their knowledge and past experiences told them that a singing talent show’s title sponsorship fees were only worth around this level. They had a limit and if it crossed that line, it would probably be something that they could not begin to imagine. They did not try to make any more guesses, nor would they be able to guess correctly!

Seeing their expressions, Zhang Ye was feeling extremely pleased

with himself.

Ha Qiqi said parched, “Teacher Zhang, just tell us quickly!”

The female editor hounded him and asked, “Yes, Teacher Zhang, don’t tease us like this anymore! Just how much did you get for the title sponsorship fee?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Alright then, I won’t keep you all guessing. For the title sponsorship of The Voice, I have already negotiated with the Brain Gold company to purchase it at the amount of...100 million!”

When this figure rolled off Zhang Ye’s tongue, everyone in the office was shocked into silence!

Even Chenchen busy playing games raised her head to look at him!

100 million?

A title sponsorship fee of 100 million RMB?!

“Ah?”

“Huh?”

“Aiyo!

“This...is this for real?”

“How much? 100 million??”

Ha Qiqi almost fainted!

Zhang Zuo and all the other staff of The Voice were getting noisy from excitement. This happiness had arrived too suddenly and out of the blue! Everyone was taken by great surprise!

Chapter 643 – Zhang Ye’s Name Is Worth 100 Million!

Soon after.

A piece of news began spreading inside of Central TV. Many of the staff who were just getting off work or already at the base of the tower heard an unexpected rumor!

The title sponsorship of The Voice had been sold!

And it was even sold for an astronomical figure of 100 million RMB!

Everyone’s first reaction was disbelief, followed by more disbelief, and finally...still only disbelief!

“Holy shit!”

“Isn’t The Voice defying all common sense now?”

“Zhang Ye’s reputation is worth 100 million? I won’t believe it even if it kills me!”

“That’s right. While I agree that Zhang Ye is awesome, if you tell me that he can get 40 million for the title sponsorship, I can still somewhat accept it. After all, as such a big shot celebrity, he must have some appeal to him, but 100 million? Are you kidding?”

Anyone with common sense will know that it's impossible! Due to the climate of the current market, if a singing talent show program can get 30 million RMB in title sponsorship fees, it would already be one of the highest tier productions around, but you managed to get 100 million RMB for your title sponsorship? Are you taking blank pieces of paper as money?"

"It must be a false rumor!"

"That's right, this has to be a rumor!"

"Hur hur, how can it be so high?"

"Do you all really believe it? It's obviously a lie that someone is spreading. This is really a brag that has gone too far! In the history of Central TV, there haven't been any cases of a variety show getting more than 80 million RMB in title sponsorship fees, let alone your so-called 100 million RMB in title sponsorship fees!"

"Not only Central TV, I don't think there's a single title sponsorship that has crossed the 100 million RMB mark at all out of the television stations across the country? If the title sponsorship was really sold for 100 million RMB, then when added with the other advertising rights fees, won't it be headed towards 150 million RMB in total? Even if you think with your feet, you should know that it can't possibly be that much! This amount has already exceeded the maximum possible for the industry! A 100 million RMB title sponsorship? Do you think this is the Spring Festival Gala? But the Spring Festival Gala doesn't even sell title sponsor rights!"

At the program team's office of The Voice.

Fu Sihong who was not in the around for the whole afternoon appeared back at the office!

At the same time, Jiang Yuan and a few managers of several related departments from Central TV Department 1 also appeared at the program team's office of The Voice.

In the office, Zhang Ye was in the middle of a conversation.

He said, "Hurry up and get the contracts ready. I need them by tonight."

A female editor replied excitedly, "Understood, Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye added, "Then get someone from the related department to prepare four sets of contracts for the guest coaches. Don't fill in the names or the amount yet. Just write it up according to the general contract template."

A male editor said, "I'll get someone to do it immediately."

At this moment, a large group of people walked into the office.

"Little Zhang!" Jiang Yuan immediately asked, "What's the situation with your program now?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Director Jiang, you’re here?”

Fu Sihong said, “You managed to pull in a sponsor?”

Zhang Ye responded, “Yes, I’ve have settled it.”

Jiang Yuan said, “It’s great that the title sponsorship was sold, but I heard that the title sponsor rights were sold at a price of 100 million RMB? Who spread such a piece of news? Was it you guys? If it is for the purposes of publicity and hype, you can just spread the news to the media and the audience instead. What’s the use of releasing the fake news within Central TV itself?”

Fu Sihong asked, “How much did you sell it for?”

Zhang Ye said happily, “It’s just as the rumors say, 100 million!”

Fu Sihong was rendered speechless.

Jiang Yuan stared at him and said, “Tell me honestly, how much was it?” He still did not quite believe it.

Ha Qiqi said on Zhang Ye’s behalf, “Director Jiang, it really sold for 100 million RMB. Just a while ago, the Brain Gold company’s manager of commercial title sponsorship rights called us to discuss the contract details. The manager also mentioned that we can sign the contract tonight and the money will be transferred to us in

batches. They even said that they can include our name of The Voice into their current advertising campaign that is already active in the market to help us promote our show and will not charge us any extra advertising fees. It will be considered a part of our cooperation together!”

Zhang Zuo and the rest of the staff were also very excited. If not for that call, they would still be quivering and be like Jiang Yuan and Fu Sihong whom didn’t believe it!

Brain Gold?

The enterprise Zhang Ye was endorsing?

The health product group that became successful overnight due to Zhang Ye’s commercial??

Jiang Yuan took a deep breath, and looked at Zhang Ye in disbelief. He said, “So that 100 million RMB is for real? It’s not just some publicity stunt?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Of course it’s not a publicity stunt, that 100 million is the real deal!”

Fu Sihong was shocked!

Jiang Yuan could only stick his thumb up and exclaim, “Good! Good! Good!”

Zhang Ye said, “I’ve endorsed CEO Wu’s company and worked with him for some time now, so the discussions went quite smoothly. CEO Wu also gave me quite a bit of face.”

How was this even a case of showing face to him!

If it were, then the face given was just too flattering!

Just your name alone was already worth 100 million?

Jiang Yuan and the others really could not imagine this outcome as their opinions of Zhang Ye changed. There were some television programs that received good reviews from the audience and industry insiders but ultimately could not make much of a profit and their title sponsorship fees were only in the region of 10 to 20 million. However, there are also some television programs that the audience and industry insiders were not so optimistic about, but just because of the popularity of the person heading it, they could still pull in numerous investors. Even before the program started broadcasting, they had already made a good profit—and Zhang Ye obviously belonged to the latter group!

For the past two days, Jiang Yuan and many leaders of Central TV Department 1 had been tortured by Zhang Ye’s antics and requests for additional funding. But today, there was finally some good news that helped restore their trust in Zhang Ye. Moreover, it also made them recognize Zhang Ye’s worth once again! So what if the audience thought it was no good? So what if the industry insiders did not feel optimistic about it? The title sponsorship fees

of 100 million had already been clinched! Their program has already been recognized by someone!

Zhang Ye took the opportunity to speak, “Director Jiang, you promised us before that we can freely allocate the amount of the title sponsorship fees as we like.”

Jiang Yuan gave him a serious look and asked, “Are you going to invest all of the 100 million into the production of the program?”

Zhang Ye nodded, “Yes. With the station’s funding of 20 million, I will use a total of 120 million as the production costs. I will create an excellent program that is both unprecedented and never to be replicated!”

Everyone gasped when they heard that!

Especially Fu Sihong, who trembled when he heard that amount!

120 million in production costs? This was only a television program! Would you need to spend so much money on it? Even if it was for a television drama or a generously budgeted movie production, a 120 million RMB investment would be considered a major production and would even reach the level of a Lunar New Year movie production! It might even be a Lunar New Year movie that was filmed in 3D! You’re going to use the resources equivalent to a major 3D movie production to produce a television program? How much more extravagant could it get! How much of the money are you intending to burn through! What kind of a spendthrift are you intending to be! Can you get a return on investments?

Jiang Yuan was actually in a dilemma right now. If Central TV Department 1 had such an astronomical figure, their financial performance for this year would certainly soar. But when he thought of his promise to Zhang Ye, he knew that he could not take back what he said. Moreover, he knew of Zhang Ye's temper as well as his rather stubborn and thorny character, so Jiang Yuan was worried that Zhang Ye would quit if he did not agree. If that happened, the 100 million in title sponsorship fees was as good as gone. Without Zhang Ye, Brain Gold would definitely not invest in them.

Clenching his teeth, Jiang Yuan finally said, "Yes, it is all allocated to your program team!"

Zhang Ye also smiled. "Alright then."

Jiang Yuan gave some words of encouragement to the program team, "I've also received news that there was a rumor going around in the afternoon concerning how the station was planning to dissolve The Voice's program team. That is a groundless statement and I've already gotten someone to investigate the identity of the rumormongers. All of you just relax and work well with Old Fu and Little Zhang on this program. The station will give you all the utmost support!"

Seeing an opportunity, Zhang Ye said, "Director Jiang, then can you give more manpower? Just the twenty plus of us are not going to be enough work on a production that's worth over a hundred million."

Jiang Yuan was speechless. He was just trying to placate and encourage the program team but now Zhang Ye was latching onto his words and trying to ask for more manpower? He asked, “How many people do you need?”

“Central TV has it’s own band, right? I do not need too many, just seven or eight people will do. That will save us the trouble of hiring a band, and besides, I trust our own people more.” Zhang Ye was making an exorbitant demand and was afraid that Jiang Yuan would not agree, so he said, “Otherwise, can the station give us another 8 to 10 million instead? The 20 million you allocated to us previously was not exactly a lot, so if you can give us more, I can make the program even better.”

Holy shit!

You still want more money?

With 120 million, it’s still not enough for you to spend?

Jiang Yuan was shocked by this request and said immediately, “I will get the band for you! Don’t even think about having more funds.”

Zhang Ye said regrettably, “Alright, I guess that’s also fine.”

Jiang Yuan did not dare say anymore and hurriedly left with his people. He was afraid that, if he stayed any longer, Zhang Ye would ask for even more resources.

When Jiang Yuan and his people left, they also brought along the news with them. The Central TV staff who were mocking the idea of a 100 million title sponsorship fee earlier had now heard the confirmation—The Voice had really signed a title sponsor for the astronomical sum of 100 million!

Shock!

Astonishment!

This reaction was everywhere!

Everyone at Central TV was stunned!

“Heavens!”

“So it really wasn’t a rumor!”

“It was true! It’s really 100 million!”

“How did Zhang Ye manage to do that?”

“This program hasn’t even been made yet and there’re no confirmed guests either, but someone still ventured to invest 100 million into it? Isn’t this about three to four times the title sponsorship fees of other talent shows?”

“They’ve gone mad! This group of people must have gone mad!”

“This totally defies all common sense!”

“This title sponsorship amount has blinded my eyes!”

“Teacher Chen Ye’s so-called astronomical title sponsorship fees are not even half what Zhang Ye’s new program is getting? Isn’t that too much of a difference! It’s not even something that can be called a slight difference! For the title sponsorship fees of a television program, a difference of 10 million is as good as a difference of one degree! Chen Ye’s program is actually behind Zhang Ye’s by six to seven degrees?”

.....

On the same night.

The news was spreading!

It was probably under the deliberate publicity of Zhang Ye’s team that the news of the 100 million RMB title sponsorship fees between Brain Gold and Central TV Department 1’s The Voice of China had been widely spread!

The media was shocked!

Fellow television stations were shocked!

Industry insiders were shocked!

All the citizens were also shocked!

A hundred million!

Was Zhang Ye's name really worth so much money?

Chapter 644 – The Most Prestigious Lineup Of Coaches In History!

The next day.

It was Monday morning.

Zhang Ye was woken by Hu Fei's call.

The current executive producer and director of Beijing Television's Do You Remember, Hu Fei, said: "Little Zhang, did your new program's title sponsorship really sell for 100 million RMB!?"

Zhang Ye yawned and said: "Yes."

Hu Fei said: "Don't fool around with me, tell me the truth!"

Zhang Ye laughed helplessly: "Why would I lie to you?"

Hu Fei: "....."

Zhang Ye said: "We'll be starting the official promotions and announcing it later today."

Hu Fei restrained himself for a long time before finally saying: "You're really awesome, kid! Everything that you've done up till

now have been things that always leave others astonished! This title sponsorship contract for your new program is really too large, do you even know that? Everyone at Beijing Television Station and the other television stations are all talking about that title sponsorship fee of Central TV Department 1's new program! This amount is...too frightening! When has any other television program ever signed a title sponsor deal that was worth as much as yours?!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "From now onward, there will be many others like this."

Hu Fei did not agree with this. He said, "This was just a one-off case based on your reputation, how could it become the norm?"

"If you don't believe it, then let's see where we end up two years later. By then, a title sponsorship fee of 100 million will probably be the norm." The situation of this world's variety programs was seen before in Zhang Ye's previous world as well. It was also a similar situation and similar downturn, so he knew that the downturn of the television industry here couldn't go on forever either. There would be a time when it ushered in another golden age. There was always a trough and a crest, which was also often referred to as the laws of the market.

Meanwhile.

On the internet, reactions about the large sum of the title sponsorship for The Voice of many netizens fell in the stage of unacceptance. In the morning, at the places where the morning newspapers were sold at, many of the entertainment sections of

the various newspapers had dedicated the headlines to the issue of the title sponsorship fees for The Voice!

Some people had found out about it last night!

While there were also those who only knew about it when they bought the papers in the morning. Upon seeing these headlines, they were all dumbfounded!

There were also people who found out about it on their way to work or when they were eating breakfast and overheard it from others. They were shocked by this piece of news!

“100 million?”

“Brain Gold must have gone crazy!”

“Will they even be able to recoup their capital?”

“Damn! What the hell! F**k!”

“Zhang Ye has started something big again!”

“This is more than something big, he has totally flipped everything upside down!”

“The Voice has surely broken the record for title sponsorship

fees! I've heard that the rumored fees for the most popular singing program at the moment, Do You Remember, was only valued at 37 million!"

"Could this be fake news? Didn't a lot of people from the industry say that there was nothing much to look forward to in The Voice? Didn't they say that this program has nothing special to it and even goes against the trends of the market? If that's the case, then why would any advertisers still dump such a huge lump sum to be the title sponsor? If this news is true, then Zhang Ye must really be very bold. Even though others are willing to pay 100 million, that doesn't mean you should take it, right? Are you trying to reshuffle the industry's cards for variety programs? Are you intending to reestablish the market rules and standards? All rules have been broken! All standards are toppled! The entire television variety industry has been totally stirred up by Zhang Ye!"

"Previous poster, aren't you worrying too much over too many things?"

"Yeah, if the Brain Gold company is willing to offer that amount, then that just means that Teacher Zhang is worth that much. How does it reestablish any market rules or stir up anything? Isn't it good that the title sponsorship fees are this much? If you let any other programs find their own title sponsors, I doubt they could even find someone willing to offer 50 million, much less 100 million RMB! What do you call this? This is what you call 'difference'! This is also an affirmation from the market upon Zhang Ye's strength and recognition! It's not like anyone can get it just because they want it! They do not enjoy the reputation Teacher Zhang has!"

“Awesome!”

“100 million RMB...I’m utterly convinced!”

“Haha, I would really like to hear what those people who did not have much optimism for The Voice have to say now. Even without anything to show for right now, they still managed to secure a 100 million RMB title sponsorship! How face smacking!”

“Don’t you all understand Face-smacking Zhang’s style yet? How many times has it been already? From the start, when people said they were not optimistic about The Voice, I already knew that it would end up this way! Anyway, I’ve always thought well of Teacher Zhang Ye. No matter what programs or works he comes up with, I will surely support them!”

Later in the morning.

Zhang Ye sent Chenchen to school before he turned around and headed towards Bayi Lake. He arrived at Central TV Tower very early to start allocating the tasks for the program’s marketing and promotions.

Not long after, Brain Gold published a statement, officially confirming their role as exclusive title sponsors to The Voice of China, having signed a sponsorship contract for 100 million RMB. At the same time, Central TV Department 1 confirmed the news too, with the program team of The Voice also stating that the 100

million title sponsorship fees would be fully invested into the production of the program. On top of the funding that was allocated to them by Central TV Department 1, The Voice would have a total production cost of 120 million RMB. They sincerely invited any interested advertisers to join as well as reiterating to anyone who had a passion for music to register for the program's audition. They also publicly announced the registration and contact channels for the program team.

When the news got out, it reignited the heated discussions!

“It's been confirmed!”

“It's true!”

“It's really 100 million! The contract has been signed!”

“What the f**k! 120 million RMB, all to be used as production costs?”

“That has to be a record!”

“I'm so looking forward to it!”

“What kind of quality can 120 million RMB create in a program? I really want to see what they can come up with!”

“Can anyone please tell me loudly that I did not see this wrongly

with my eyes? Isn't a funding of 100 million RMB more commonly seen in a movie shoot? Is this all going to be used only for producing a television program?"

"You did not see wrong!"

"Zhang Ye's making a really big move this time! And I like it!"

"Hahaha! If he's going to do it, he's going to make a big one! If he's going to do it, he's going to make it the most exciting! This has always been Teacher Zhang's style! If it succeeds, his name will surely go down in the annals of history! If it fails, then it will definitely leave a stink for ten thousand years! Zhang Ye's motto is 'reject mediocrity'! That is what I like best about him!"

"We already know the program's format and content, so now the only question left is: who will be the guests?"

"Yeah, who will be joining the show?"

"Those big shot celebrities basically no longer participate in talent shows anymore. With the viewer ratings and joining payments at near all-time lows, it makes it very difficult to get anyone good to join."

"If only Sister Zhang would join the show."

"Hur hur, previous poster, stop dreaming."

“I also know that it’s just a dream, but I still want to think that way since I really like Sister Zhang a lot.”

“It’s impossible that an S-list Heavenly Queen would take part in these kinds of talent shows as a guest. Do you know how much people like them can earn from just filming a movie? They would gain more reputation as well, and even have a chance at winning an award, so why would they bother with a television program? Even if it’s just those A-list singers, I doubt they could invite them either.”

“Besides, The Voice already does not have a very good reputation, with the professionals rating it quite poorly.”

At Central TV.

In The Voice’s program team office.

Everyone here was asking the same questions too.

After the female administrative staff member passed a few copies of the general contract template to Zhang Ye, she asked, “Teacher Zhang, do you need me to prepare a list of guest coaches candidates for you? Shall we start inviting them one by one?”

Zhang Ye gave a wave of his hands and said, “That’s not

necessary.”

Ha Qiqi said, “The first round of preliminary auditions for the contestants will be held this afternoon. I’ve arranged for it to start at 2 PM. If we do not begin picking which guest coaches to invite, I’m afraid it will be too late.”

Zhang Zuo also said, “That’s right, Director Zhang. We ought to get prepared early since the market environment isn’t that good. The guests are getting more and more difficult to invite, especially those big shot guests who always reject television talent show programs. We have to identify our targets first and contact them one at a time and negotiate. If it doesn’t work out, we move to the next candidate.”

Zhang Ye laughed, “No need to go through all that trouble. I’ve already negotiated with the guests.”

“Ah?” Wu Yi said, “Already negotiated?”

Ha Qiqi said in surprise, “You contacted them yesterday afternoon?”

Zhang Ye nodded a few times, and then looked at his watch before saying, “I was afraid that the news would be leaked too early and cause unnecessary trouble or changes, so I kept it a secret instead. Looking at the time now, I think they should be here soon?”

As soon as he stopped talking, a few people were already at the door.

A staff member of Central TV Department 1 brought the guests in and said, “Teacher Zhang, they were looking for your office, so I brought them here.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Thanks, friend.”

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest all did a double take when they saw them. It turned out to be the famous songstress, Zhang Xia, and behind her were her lawyer and manager, a total of three people!

Everyone was stunned!

Only Zhang Ye was not surprised. He went up to shake her hand and said, “Grandma Zhang, you’re here right on time.”

Zhang Xia shook his hand and said, “I’m always on time, hur hur. Let’s get the contract signed then.”

“Sure, it’s already prepared. I’ll let you have a look first.” Zhang Ye took out the contract and passed it to her.

Ha Qiqi pulled Zhang Ye aside and asked with a face registering surprise, “You managed to get Zhang Xia to step out from her retirement? Doesn’t she no longer take part in any variety programs?”

Everyone was truly surprised at this as no one could have expected Zhang Ye to get the issue of the guests settled so quickly after only going out for a short while. He even managed to invite the renowned songstress as a guest for their show. Everyone knew the program quality would surely be raised by several levels if they had Grandma Zhang fronting the show. With Zhang Xia joining, not only would her appeal and popularity help the program, her professional strength would also make the program more credible. This was a great artist who had sung for the country's leaders and foreign emissaries in the past!

Before Zhang Ye could answer, before they could get over their surprise, when Zhang Xia and her team were looking through the contract, another couple and their managers arrived.

A female editor exclaimed, "Chen...Chen Guang!"

Another male editor stared at them. "Fan Wenli!"

When Chen Guang came into the office, he directly went to Zhang Ye, smiling and waving at him. He said, "Teacher Zhang, we're not late, are we?"

"No, but since Teacher Chen and Teacher Fan are gracing us with both your presences, it wouldn't matter even if you were late." Zhang Ye spoke with a mouthful of courtesy and went up to welcome them with the contracts.

Zhang Zuo was getting excited!

Ha Qiqi was also getting excited!

Chen Guang had come? Fan Wenli had also come? These two were the very well-known ideal couple of the entertainment circle! And when it came to popularity, these two definitely belonged to the top of the singing world! As an example, among the guest coaches in all the singing talent shows being held by television stations across the whole country, even if the most popular one stepped forward, they would not be a match for the popularity of just one of either Chen Guang or Fan Wenli! And it was even more so if you compared the two of them together! If Chen Guang and Fan Wenli joined any of those singing talent shows, they would surely sweep all those coaching panels off their feet. They were definitely the Big Brother and Sister of any coaching lineup!

And now, the two of them were here?

They were both going to join The Voice??

The staff of the program team were all getting dizzy from this. This was no longer a matter of whether all this was happening too suddenly or not. This was a surprise no one could have expected even in their wildest dreams. With just one of them, they could already sweep away all the other singing programs, much less two of them! Zhang Xia together with Chen Guang and Fan Wenli? This lineup of coaches was too prestigious!

How did Teacher Zhang do it?

How did he get the three of them to come aboard??

Chapter 645 – On Fire Even Before The Broadcast!

Outside the office area.

Many people from around Central TV Department 1 had gathered here to watch.

“Who’s that?”

“Is that Zhang Xia?”

“Whoa, what is Chen Guang doing here?”

“Fan Wenli is also here with her manager?”

“What are they doing here!”

“It can’t be that The Voice’s program team managed to pull them aboard for the show, right?”

“Ah!”

“Don’t scare me like that, my heart is not that strong!”

“Each one of them could be considered a big star who could easily

shake the singing industry with just a light stamp of their feet! With any one of them coming aboard, it's already a dream fulfilled, so how did they get all three of them?"

With so many celebrities here who were the big shots among big shots of the singing industry, many staff from the other departments had now gathered curious on this level at Central TV Department 1 where a small portion of the offices were located. Although they could guess what was happening, they were all still rather in disbelief that it could really happen.

Even Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo of the program team for The Voice found it hard to believe, much less them!

However, what would surprise them much more than that was only about to begin. They thought that the three people gathered here right now was already a very astonishing sight to see. But the next moment—when another person walked in from outside, whether it was Central TV Department 1's staff or The Voice's program team—everyone was left with their eyes wide and tongues tied!

It was a woman, and she was not a celebrity, yet many people knew her and had heard of her name. The reason was simply because she was the manager of the Heavenly Queen!

It was Fang Weihong!

Zhang Yuanqi's manager!

At this moment, the entire area inside and outside of the office fell silent!

Zhang Xia blinked.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were dumbfounded.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest were also stunned!

Only Zhang Ye quickly stepped up to welcome her. “Haha, Sister Fang!”

Fang Weihong did not look to be in the mood for small talk. She just shook Zhang Ye’s hand and said, “Teacher Zhang, pass me the contract. I have to leave after getting it signed.”

Zhang Ye asked, “Sister Zhang is not here today?”

“She’s busy with an activity and authorized me to sign on her behalf.” Fang Weihong was already a familiar acquaintance with Zhang Ye having worked with him twice before, so her tone with him was also less formal. “Oh, Teacher Zhang, do you know that Sister Zhang has such a packed schedule recently that it has almost filled up the entire 24 hours of her day? I was still thinking of how I could reject some bookings to lighten the load, but somehow, this new booking arrived. Sister Zhang is really great. She did not even ask me about it and directly agreed with you. She’s not a superhuman. Besides, there’s only so much time in a day, so who gets left with planning her time and schedules then? Won’t it just

be left to me to coordinate and organize her activities? I already have a big headache from all these.”

Zhang Ye laughed, “That’s because Sister Zhang is so popular. Just look at people like me who are small timers and have no activities. All I do is just go to work or drink some tea.”

Fang Weihong laughed when she heard that. She replied, “Oh, come on. That’s just because you don’t have a management company and refuse to take on any commercial deals. If you spread the word that you’d do them, even with a hundred hours a day, it wouldn’t be enough for you.” She paused for a bit and then said, “What I’m really curious about is, since Sister Zhang has always rejected taking any talent shows, how on earth did you convince her to do it?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “I promised to write her a song.”

Fang Weihong, suddenly understanding everything, exclaimed, “That’s exactly what I thought!”

Zhang Xia said from a distance away, “Little Fang, you’re here too?”

“Ai, Grandma Zhang, did you get deceived by Teacher Zhang and join the program too?” Fang Weihong politely greeted her while casually making a joke.

Zhang Xia was tickled and quipped, “Yes, I was fooled by this

child.”

After chatting for a little while, Fang Weihong also shook Chen Guang and his wife’s hand and chatted for a while. They all knew each other; it wasn’t the first time they’d met.

Chen Guang was quite surprised. “I hadn’t expected Sister Zhang to join as well!”

Fang Weihong also said helplessly, “Me neither. Yesterday, Zhang Ye made a call and spoke to Sister Zhang directly about the contract. I didn’t know about it until much later.”

Fan Wenli looked over admirably at Zhang Ye.

Ha Qiqi and the others were also looking at Zhang Ye with extreme admiration!

Oh my god!

Zhang Yuanqi is really coming aboard!

Zhang Ye had somehow managed to invite the Heavenly Queen to join!

An S-list celebrity who always rejected taking any talent shows and didn’t even usually appear on television as a program guest was now making an exception and joining their program?

Everyone knew that Zhang Yuanqi was a celebrity at the very top of the entertainment industry in the country. Being able to invite her wasn't down to a matter of money anymore. It wasn't like she lacked that anyway. But what she was chasing after was of a different level and not found in the domestic market anymore. She had already set her sights on the foreign markets, so none of them knew how Zhang Ye had managed to get this deal done! How did he convince the Heavenly Queen!

Central TV was in chaos!

Jiang Yuan and some other leaders came over a while later, as they were the authorized signatories for Central TV for their part of the contract.

At this time, when the amount that Zhang Ye had agreed with the four celebrities earlier was written down by him, the figures were finally made known publicly for the first time. When they saw the joining fees, even though they had just received an astronomical title sponsorship fee earlier, everyone was still stunned with their mouths agape!

Zhang Xia: 10 million!

Chen Guang: 10 million!

Fan Wenli: 10 million!

Zhang Yuanqi: 40 million!

They could still reluctantly accept the joining fees of Zhang Xia, Chen Guang, and Fan Wenli since it somewhat matched their statuses and were done in accordance with the market practices for similar programs which usually paid out several million at least. But since the three of them didn't usually take up such projects, it resulted in an additional premium of about 2 to 3 million more than the market rates which everyone could understand. But the fee for Zhang Yuanqi left everyone sucking in a breath of cold air!

40 million!

That was a f**king sky-high joining fee!

Many other talent shows only had a total investment of around 30 million or so for the entire program and production, and that was even for the more highly invested in programs. But Zhang Yuanqi alone already commanded a fee of 40 million? It was even higher than the entire investments put into other programs? This was a never before seen sky-high joining fee in the entire variety show industry! Even if she were an S-list Heavenly Queen, this amount was still way beyond the market rates!

This was too frightening!

This was too exciting!

Yet another record had been broken!

Many of the staff looked over at Jiang Yuan, wondering what he would say.

Jiang Yuan was trembling from this for a while, but managed to calm his nerves, and he quickly signed off on the contract as the authorized party for Central TV. Then he stamped the contract firmly with the organization's seal!

Was it expensive?

Yes! It was too damn expensive!

But was it worth it? Jiang Yuan felt that it was worth it, and it seemed like many of the Central TV's staff also felt that it was worth it! If Zhang Ye's name could already pull in a sponsorship of 100 million, who was to say that the reputation of Zhang Yuanqi—an S-list Heavenly Queen—did not command a joining fee of 40 million!?

Being able to have Zhang Yuanqi to come aboard was already an unprecedented event. It was something that no other television stations' programs could achieve. Now that Zhang Ye had completed this unimaginable task, it was already considered a job completed. As for the money spent, that was only a secondary concern!

The contract signing ended.

Everyone started clapping.

Outside the office, many of those Central TV Department 1's staff who did not seem too optimistic about The Voice back then and felt that the program would be canceled even before it started were now looking at Zhang Ye and his program team with a different attitude. A 100 million title sponsorship, a total production value of more than 100 million, a coaching group headed by a Heavenly Queen. This investment and lineup had them patting themselves on the chest and admitting that no other television program in the history of this industry could do what The Voice had done. They did not know how the program would turn out from here on, but just this glittering lineup alone had totally blinded everyone!

An hour later.

The promotions and marketing for The Voice began and immediately spread like wildfire!

On the official website for The Voice, the section where the introduction for the four guest coaches were originally a black picture with a question mark over them but were now being updated with their pictures and detailed introductions!

“Quick, take a look!”

“Wow, the list of coaches is being announced!”

“How exciting, I wonder who's the first?”

“I’m here, I’m here to check it out!”

With The Voice at the heart of the struggle on the news, all entertainment news today was focused on them. Right now, any minor changes on the website would attract the attention of countless people!

The first name was announced: Zhang Xia!

This caused quite a commotion!

“It’s Grandma Zhang!”

“She’s a great singer!”

“Heavens! Grandma Zhang has come out of retirement?”

The second name was also updated: Chen Guang!

At once, Chen Guang’s fans all flocked to this news!

“My prince!”

“Old Chen has joined as well?”

“Hahaha! Old Chen, well done!”

“Chen Guang and Zhang Ye are two of my favorite celebrities! I would never have expected them to work together! Looks like this is going to be fun!”

“Teacher Chen is a truly talented singer! I like his songs a lot!”

Then, the third name: Fan Wenli!

“Aiyo!”

“Old Chen, even your wife has joined!”

“Heavens! They’re all big shot celebrities!”

“Yeah, just how much did The Voice’s program team spend on this!”

“My eyes have been blinded!”

“Even Old Chen and Old Fan have been invited? Isn’t this line up defying all common sense? Won’t Teacher Zhang have to pay for his crimes if he scares us all to death? There’s still a fourth? Who’s the last one going to be?”

“Quick, announce the fourth coach’s identity already!”

“Why are they so slow, who could it be?”

“Who’s the final one?”

As the names were announced one by one, in just a short period of time, everyone’s appetite was whetted as they excitedly reacted to each announcement. Everyone was utterly convinced by Zhang Ye’s amazing work. It was truly too surprising!

Eventually, under the watchful gaze of everyone, the fourth coach’s picture was updated!

Refresh! A picture of Zhang Yuanqi at a concert now appeared in the place of the fourth coach’s introduction!

Upon seeing Zhang Yuanqi’s picture, it was as if at that moment everyone browsing on the website for The Voice had fallen silent. It seemed like time had stopped for an instant!

Then the comment section exploded!

“What?”

“It’s the Heavenly Queen!?”

“Damn!”

“Do they need to be that extravagant!?”

“Did Central TV invest all the money they had? They’re really willing to give everything for this program?”

“Not only that, this is no longer a question of money! In the past, even when many variety shows offered Zhang Yuanqi a lot of money, she did not join them!”

“This is big news!”

“The Heavenly Queen has descended onto The Voice!”

“Is this for real?”

“Zhang Ye’s truly awesome!”

“I only wonder how much Sister Zhang’s joining fee is worth!”

“Yeah, how much?”

At this time, an anonymous user left a comment: “Don’t ask how much it is, all I can tell you is that it is a sky-high figure!”

“Don’t leave us in suspense!”

“Quickly speak!”

“Just how much money was it?”

That anonymous user did not reply for a long time, and then finally posted: “The exact amount is...40 million before taxes!”

With that, those industry insiders from the other television stations who came to check out the situation nearly vomited blood!

What did you say?

40 million?

It was getting lively on the internet as the media and netizens began discussing this. All these news and updates had really left everyone in shock!

The people left speechless were those experts.

Many of these experts and so-called industry insiders did not say a word. Because they really did not know what they could say anymore. They had analyzed The Voice of China from head to toe and called out its problems and flaws, saying and backing up their claims of how this program would definitely only be a cult television program or average quality show, similar to all the other talent shows produced in this time of downturn. Yet somehow these big shot celebrities still jumped aboard the program? Why did they all rush to join like they were not afraid of anything?

Were they all crazy?

Some people were looking forward to it.

Some people called it good.

Some people maintained their doubt.

Some people still were not optimistic.

But however people put it, with the attention The Voice of China was getting, with the lineup of the guest coaches, with the invested production costs and title sponsorship, the program was already on fire even before the broadcast! This discussion topic could no longer be matched by anything else!

Zhang Ye had planned for all the news to be spread out within a 12-hour time frame in order to bombard the internet with overwhelming publicity for The Voice. The first steps were already beautifully taken, but from here on, he knew he had to spend more effort on the auditions!

Chapter 646 – These Are The Contestants You Guys Picked?

In the afternoon.

At Central TV's basement recording studio.

This was the venue that The Voice's program team had booked temporarily to hold the preliminary auditions. They did not actually need to do any recording but only needed to use the location today to pick some outstanding and talented contestants for the recorded stage auditions by the coaches. The preliminary auditions were estimated to take place over two weeks. It would be held either once daily, once every two days, or even once every three days. The degree of intensity would depend on the number of contestants and their standards. The application conditions only required candidates to submit a demo of their singing. If the program team staff felt that the candidate met the required standard, they would notify them to make their way here for the preliminary auditions. If it's not up to standard, then they would not even be notified at all. After all, with just the program team staff's strength, they were unable to support so many contestants and decidedly had to make a small sacrifice in some of the proceedings.

At the venue.

The staff had all arrived and gathered.

Zhang Ye came over holding a box lunch he had taken from the

Central TV cafeteria. As he was in a rush, he decided to eat as he walked over, finishing it up just as he arrived.

Little Wang walked up to him and said, “Hand that to me.”

“OK, thanks a lot.” Zhang Ye gave the empty lunch box to her.

At the other side, Ha Qiqi—in charge of the preliminary auditions—was pointing and instructing the staff on their work. When she saw Zhang Ye, she immediately brought two people over with her and said, “Teacher Zhang, the arrangements are almost all done. We can proceed with the auditions.”

Zhang Ye nodded. “When will the contestants arrive?”

Ha Qiqi answered, “Many of them are already here, but we’re only starting in the afternoon, so I got someone to bring them to the waiting room.”

They sat down in front of the computer.

Zhang Ye randomly opened a few emails and listened to some of the demos that the contestants sent in. He said, “Were these chosen today?”

Ha Qiqi nodded. “They were picked by me and the professionals one at a time.” Then she introduced the few people beside her to Zhang Ye.

A Teacher Sun.

And a Teacher Yan.

They were both music industry insiders who were borrowed from Central TV.

Zhang Ye shook hands with them and got to know them a bit. He said, “Teacher Sun, Teacher Yan, I will have to trouble the both of you in the coming days.”

Teacher Sun immediately said, “It’s no trouble at all. We’re here to help, so you can consider us professional consultants who give our opinions for your consideration. As for how the program will be done and how to pick the contestants, we will still leave that up to you, Director Zhang.” Since they were transferred to the program team of The Voice, they had to listen to Zhang Ye’s commands as they were now members of his team.

One of the music consultant recommended, “Director Zhang, this person you’re listening to right now is one of the better ones. Both Old Sun and I agree on this, as does Assistant Director Ha.”

Ha Qiqi praised, “Right, this person sings very well.”

Only then did Zhang Ye seriously listen to it.

It was a woman's voice. The vocals and basic singing were quite good, and the sound was crystal clear. There wasn't any sharpness or anything bad with it. She also had quite a high soprano voice.

Teacher Sun analyzed, "She should be considered a very trained vocalist. It feels very stable as well. Listening to her voice, it probably belongs to someone who has had experience performing onstage before. And judging from her picture, she looks quite good too. I feel that she has what it takes to become a star."

Teacher Yan added, "But it will also depend on how well she performs later."

Name: Chang Si.

Gender: Female.

Age: 25.

Hometown: Beihe Province.

Occupation: Music Teacher.

After taking a look at her personal information, Zhang Ye did not say anything. He just stored it in his mind and asked, "For today's first wave of preliminary auditions, are there any with good potential?"

Ha Qiqi pointed at an email on screen. “This person is quite good too.”

The music consultant beside them nodded and said, “This person was trained in the performing arts and graduated from a real music college. His singing is very good and he’s also currently a backup singer for a certain star, so we can consider him to be a professional. If such a person got on stage, he probably would not have any stage fright at all and could perform quite well instead. Since we have to consider if they can perform to their potential while on television, if we get total rookies for this show, they might get nervous and make mistakes. When that happens, the quality of the broadcast will also be affected. That’s why on all the other talent show programs most of the contestants are in music-related professions. Those type of contestants are always the most well-accepted by television programs. They’re often invited to take part in many different programs since due to various reasons they did not do well in their past participations on the other programs, though their stability on the programs is what’s good about them.”

Name: Hu Liangyi.

Gender: Male.

Occupation: Musician.

When Zhang Ye finished listening to that person’s demo, he did not show any expression at all and only asked, “Just these two? No others?”

Ha Qiqi observed Zhang Ye's reaction, not knowing what to make of it. She answered, "We've already notified 50 candidates to join today's round of auditions. Most of them are good enough. It's just that these two are the more outstanding ones. We've also singled out a few others that are quite good, though they did not register for the audition and were recommended by staff from our internal department or seen on other television programs instead. If you agree to it, we can immediately start making contact with them. Invite them to join our program?"

Zhang Ye asked, "Who are they? Let me take a look."

"Such as this person." Ha Qiqi bent over to handle the mouse and clicked on a video clip of a singing talent show from two years ago. "Here, take a look at this one."

The video started playing.

It was of a man singing a Heavenly King's classic track.

Ha Qiqi said, "Back then, on the show, he did not qualify and was eliminated at the second round, but most music consultants have a good impression of him. He most probably did not get into the next round because of some result fixing by the program team for that competition."

Zhang Ye did not say a word.

Ha Qiqi said, "Director Zhang?"

The music consultants also looked at Zhang Ye.

Ha Qiqi immediately continued, “And there are a few other musicians we have our eyes on. Their professional qualities are very good. I know that our program is looking for people who can sing well, and those people are quite good at singing as well. Why don’t I show you? Their information is all in the computer. It should be easy to talk to them if I invite them over; alternatively, we can also offer them an appearance payment which I’m sure they’d agree to.”

Zhang Ye gave a wave of his hands and said, “Forget it, let’s not look at those first.” He checked his watch for the time and suggested, “Why don’t we do it this way: the auditions will start at 1:30 PM sharp, while I’ll go out for a while and be back very soon.”

Having said that, Zhang Ye left. Zhang Ye had come to the audition venue with high expectations, but before he could even warm his seat, he already had to leave.

The program team staff looked at each other with blank faces.

Wu Yi, puzzled at this, asked, “What’s with Teacher Zhang?”

“I don’t know,” Ha Qiqi replied, not understanding anything either. “We found people in accordance to the standards, didn’t we? Don’t all the other talent shows also pick their contestants this way? It’s not like we judged them based on their physical appearances either.”

One of the music consultants remarked, “Maybe it’s that Teacher Zhang just had something to attend to.”

Ha Qiqi took her mind off the matter and said, “Let’s continue from here then. Go through the candidates’ information once more while wait for Teacher Zhang to come back before we begin the auditions. Notify the candidates about the start time and provide them with box lunches if they haven’t eaten lunch yet. Little Wang, I leave you in charge of the waiting room.”

.....

Outside.

When Zhang Ye came out of the basement, he briefly shook his head a little. He wasn’t just dissatisfied with Ha Qiqi and the others regarding the candidates they chose, he was extremely frustrated. Was it that the contestants were not up to standard? It wasn’t that and in fact their singing was also relatively good and safe, but this was not the desired show effect he wanted. He needed a different kind of contestant! From the start, Ha Qiqi and the others—or rather it should be said that the whole of Central TV and the entire country—all did not know what kind of a program he was aiming to do. They basically had no understanding of the concept that Zhang Ye wanted, not one of them! But come to think of it, he couldn’t blame them. It was just because Zhang Ye had seen things they had never seen before, so their understanding of things was much too different!

How could he handle this?

What could he do to make them understand what he was looking for?

Zhang Ye felt that using words to explain was not enough. He needed to be more direct and place an example in front of their eyes and ears to get his idea of the concept across to them. And so, Zhang Ye thought of a person, someone whose voice involuntarily floated into his mind. He decided that he would pull in the first contestant for their program to tell them what his understanding of a good voice was!

Well-trained and safe?

A high soprano?

With experience performing onstage?

Slick and proficient in singing?

—Was that what having a good voice meant?

Zhang Ye got into his car and drove straight out from television station tower and headed for the city.

Chapter 647 – Confirmation Of The First-Seeded Contestant!

Afternoon.

Along Nanxinhua Avenue.

It was currently afternoon recess at No. 2 Experimental Primary School. The main gate was locked as students were not allowed to leave the school during lunch break or breaks between classes. The main gate would only be opened at the start or end of school.

The car stopped and Zhang Ye got out from the car.

He walked near to the guardroom and greeted, “Uncle.”

When the security uncle saw him, his eyes lit up. “Zhang Ye!”

“It’s me, can you open the side gate for me?” Zhang Ye smiled.

The security uncle naturally knew who he was and asked, “Your kid has given you trouble again? The teacher has called you up for a meeting again?” He fished out the key and opened the side gate for Zhang Ye. “Come on in.”

Zhang Ye said, “Thank you very much, Uncle.”

Walking in farther, he reached the large playground.

He could see many children playing on it, some [kicking the shuttlecock](#), some playing basketball, and some others in a group, playing Eagle Catches Chicks, a traditional Chinese chase game.

“Ah!”

“Don’t run!”

“Hahaha, Fang, you’re too slow!”

“Pass it to me, pass it to me!”

“Take the shot!”

The school field was filled with frolicking sounds and voices.

Zhang Ye could not see Chenchen anywhere. Even without needing to think, he could figure that out Chenchen would not participate in these activities. She was definitely in the classroom napping or reading some comic book she had snatched from some little boy. Zhang Ye did not go upstairs because he had not come for Chenchen. He had other motives this time. His eyes scanned the school field and he suddenly spotted the person he was looking for.

At a corner of the playground.

Chenchen's form teacher Zhao Mei, P.E. teacher Luo Yu, and some other teachers were seated on a long bench, happily chatting as they supervised the children's activities. This was a school regulation as they were worried that the children would get into trouble while playing or injure themselves from overexertion as they played sports during the break. Every afternoon recess, there would be some teachers on shift duty at the playground. If it snowed, there would be more teachers supervising the break.

Zhao Mei said, "Do you all know about Zhang Ye's new program?"

A sixth grade mathematics teacher said, "How can we not know about it? It's all over today's news!"

Luo Yu added, "My goodness, even Zhang Yuanqi, Old Chen, and Old Fan joined as coaches for the program. With so much money spent, this program must definitely be good to watch!"

Zhao Mei laughed, "I'm also waiting for it as well. I'm really anticipating watching it on television."

Beside them, a fine arts teacher suddenly looked at Luo Yu with interest and asked, "Teacher Luo, why don't you go and take part in the program since you like singing so much?"

Luo Yu did not even give it thought and waved it off. "Heh, me? Forget it."

Zhao Mei said, “Don’t the application conditions for The Voice state that they do not judge on looks or background? Teacher Luo, you should give it a try since you like to sing so much. Your dreams of becoming a singer might actually get fulfilled this time. Previously, when you criticized Zhang Ye and tore into him, it was only because of work. It was right to tell her guardian off as Chenchen was really being too naughty. From what I know of Zhang Ye, he is not a petty person and he certainly won’t take it to heart.”

Luo Yu continuously waved her hands. “Come on, even if Teacher Zhang did not bear any grudges, do you expect that I could appear on TV to sing? I’m afraid that the equipment will be damaged by my voice!”

With that, several teachers burst out laughing.

Everyone in school knew of her reputation for having a lousy voice.

Luo Yu sighed, “I love to sing but I still know where I stand. That is such a big program with over a hundred million invested and even has the Heavenly Queen as coach. With my looks, how can I appear on TV? As a P.E. teacher, I should just concentrate on teaching my P.E. classes. Teacher Yiyi is a more suitable candidate to apply since she is good-looking and also a music teacher. She should just go and apply. Besides, we have some degree of a relationship with Zhang Ye. If we ask a favor of him, it should not be a problem to take part in the audition, right?”

Zhao Mei said, “How would we ask for his help? Zhang Ye is not someone you can just meet if you want to.”

Luo Yu exclaimed, “If not, then we can just call him up on the pretext of a guardian meeting. Call him and make him come over. Hasn’t Chencheng, the little rascal, always been getting in trouble anyway?”

Suddenly, a voice sounded from behind their backs.

“Who wants to call me?” Zhang Ye abruptly appeared!

Luo Yu turned around and was dumbfounded. “Ah!”

Zhao Mei and the rest of the teachers were also stunned. “Zhang Ye?”

Then Zhao Mei seemingly thought of something and laughed. She patted Luo Yu and said, “Those words were from Teacher Luo and do not represent our opinions.”

Why is he here!

Speak of the devil!

When Luo Yu heard that, her heart sank. Previously, she did know that this person was Zhang Ye as he was wearing sunglasses and it obstructed her view of his face. She only knew that he was

Chenchen's guardian, so she criticized him without a second thought. Afterwards, when she realized that he was Zhang Ye, the composer and writer of her two favorite songs, her stomach churned. Today, Luo Yu was just idly chatting with a few other teachers and she just happened to make a joke of calling up the guardian for a meeting but who knew that Zhang Ye was actually right behind them and could hear what they were saying? Luo Yu literally wished that she could find a hole to crawl in to hide herself from this embarrassment!

How unlucky!

Why am I always so pathetic!?

"Teacher Zhang, no, no, I was just joking!" Luo Yu quickly came up with an excuse, "And the previous time, I really didn't know that it was you. No one told me anything at all!"

The bells started ringing.

It was the signal for classes to begin again.

A female teacher suddenly said, "I'm leaving then. It's time for class."

"I'll be leaving too," the fine arts teacher said.

Zhao Mei looked at Zhang Ye and asked, "Are you looking for Chenchen? Or?"

Zhang Ye said, “No.”

Zhao Mei nodded. “Then alright, I’ll go to my class with the children now.”

When Luo Yu saw that everyone had left, she also wanted to leave, so she said, “Then I also...” Actually where could she go? As a P.E. teacher, even if she had classes, it would be right on this playground.

Zhang Ye stretched out his hand and called to her, “Teacher Luo, please stay put.”

Luo Yu’s eyes shrank. It’s over, it’s really over, Zhang Ye has a grudge against me now! He’s going to find trouble with me! Oh my mother! Why do I have such a hard life!

“Are you calling me?” Luo Yu acted dumb, stood still, and turned her head around.

Zhang Ye asked, “Do you have any classes in the afternoon?”

Luo Yu wanted to say that she had classes until midnight, but she really did not have any classes in the afternoon, so she stammered, “About that...”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Let’s have a talk, shall we?”

Luo Yu grit her teeth and acquiesced, “Alright.” She turned around and led Zhang Ye to the equipment storage room as there was no one there. It did have some small chairs in an alcove where they could also have drinks.

The room was small and simple.

“I’ll get you some water.” Luo Yu busied herself with chores.

Zhang Ye said, “There’s no need, I will not stay for long. I’m here to ask you about a matter.”

Luo Yu said at once, “No need to say anymore, I know it’s all my fault, I...”

“It’s not about that matter.” Zhang Ye was a bit speechless and said, “I’d like to ask you about that day I heard you singing ‘Wishing We Last Forever.’ Well, do you always sing like that normally?”

Luo Yu was shocked. “Singing? ‘Wishing We Last Forever’? Uh, that’s right. My voice has always been quite lousy and everyone calls me Raspy Luo. That’s how my singing is and no one likes to hear it. I like to sing whenever I’m free and will just grab any opportunity to sing a few lines. My family members also find me irritating when I’m singing. Everytime I open my mouth to sing, my mother will go out and take a stroll.”

Zhang Ye asked, “Do you like to sing?”

Luo Yu replied, “Of course I like to. I’ve even been singing every day since childhood. Why else do you think my vocals got damaged during puberty and became like this?”

Zhang Ye nodded and inquired, “Then if you are given a stage to perform on now, would you dare to step up on it?”

Luo Yu instinctively answered, “What’s there to be afraid of? As long as anyone wants to listen, I will try to sing even if you place me on the surface of the moon! Eh, why are you asking me this?”

Zhang Ye acknowledged and then said something surprising, “In that case, as the Executive Director of The Voice of China, I hereby formally invite you to join us!”

Luo Yu was shocked. “What?”

Zhang Ye repeated, “I will reserve a spot for your participation!”

Luo Yu exclaimed, “Reserve a spot for me? Why are you reserving it for me?”

Zhang Ye said in an amused manner, “Because you’re good at singing, so I want you to participate and get involved with The Voice’s audition and the competition proper!”

Luo Yu said, “I can appear on TV?”

Zhang Ye confirmed, “That’s right.”

Luo Yu said, “Is it the most talked about program right now, that The Voice of China? The program that even the Heavenly Queen has joined?”

Zhang Ye affirmed, “Yes.”

Luo Yu said, “My singing is good?”

Zhang Ye maintained, “That’s right.”

Luo Yu hurriedly waved it off. “Oh, come on, how can my singing be good when my voice is so lousy. You should reconsider. Even my own mother who is my immediate family does not like my singing, so why would others think it’s good? Do you think I don’t know what I’m worth?”

Zhang Ye was amused by these words. People from Beijing had a particular sense of humor, comprised of dark humor and self-mockery. It was specific to the locals of Beijing and could not be found at other regions as they all had their own different and unique humor styles.

Zhang Ye attested, “Teacher Luo, I came specifically for you this time. I’m very sincere in inviting you and truly feel that you are good at singing. Who says that you have a lousy voice? I really

don't feel that way. Besides, I would not have come looking for you if you had a traditionally nice voice. Central TV is having an audition around 1 PM. I don't need to deceive you on this matter if you agree. You don't have any classes in the afternoon anyways, right? Then you should directly follow me right now and come to the audition venue. If you're afraid of embarrassing yourself or that your voice would scare others, then forget it. Treat it like I did not say anything. You will remain as a P.E. teacher here and continue to sing only for yourself."

Having said that, Zhang Ye stopped talking.

Seeing Zhang Ye this serious, Luo Yu was also at a loss for words!

After about thirty seconds, Luo Yu asked, "Can I really make it?"

Zhang Ye nodded. "It's not going to be a problem."

Luo Yu asked again, "Are you sure my voice can really..."

Zhang Ye interrupted, "I'm sure."

Upon hearing this, Luo Yu finally hardened her resolve. "OK! If you guys want to listen! Then I will sing! Who's afraid of who! Teacher Zhang, I will go!"

Zhang Ye smiled and uttered, "I was waiting for you to say that!"

Chapter 648 – Open Calls For The Voice Begin!

Later that afternoon.

At the venue of the audition.

It was almost time and the first wave of contestants for the day were already gathered. However, since Executive Director Zhang Ye was not back yet, Ha Qiqi and the program team staff did not dare to kick off the audition as they preferred to wait for the person in charge to come back first.

“Why isn’t it starting yet?”

“It should be starting soon.”

“Aiyah, I’m so nervous.”

“Actually, I just took a shot and submitted my application. I never expected that I would get notified.”

“Who are the judges? What kind of music genres do they like?”

“I heard that Executive Director Zhang Ye will be here today, so getting through will completely depend on Zhang Ye’s decision. I think that if we sing either of Zhang Ye’s two songs for the audition, the chances of going through will be higher, but I’m only

just guessing so.”

“That’s right, that’s right!”

“Then I will sing ‘Woman Flower.’”

“It will not be as simple as you all think. Whether it is ‘Wishing We Last Forever’ or ‘Woman Flower,’ these two songs were all sung by the Heavenly Queen before. Be it your singing ability or voice, do you all think you can sing better than the Heavenly Queen? Can you all carry the song and make it your own so that it feels different from the Heavenly Queen’s version? This type of song that everyone is familiar with will not be of help when exhibiting your own unique characteristics. If not carefully dealt with, it may even backfire, making the song feel neither like your own nor like the original.”

“That’s true.”

“Good point.”

In the contestants’ waiting room, everyone was busily chatting away. There were all kinds of people here, such as some anxious contestants who made many trips to the toilet, some sitting by themselves in a corner and practicing their songs, and even some experienced talent show veterans relating their experiences to the first-timers.

Among them were two people in the group who were relatively

more conspicuous. One of them was Chang Si and the other one was Hu Liangyi. They were the two highly recommended contestants by Ha Qiqi and the music consultants, both considered professional musicians. One was a music teacher, the other a backup singer. They'd already had some years of experience in the industry, could sing very well, and had good looks, so naturally they stood out with more confidence than the rest in such a setting. It could also have been due to the fact that Ha Qiqi and the program team had already communicated with them earlier, so they knew of their importance compared to the others. As a result, they unconsciously drew a boundary and stayed away from the rest of the contestants. They were both seated in the last row and when other contestants came up to talk to them they did not respond much. One of them played with their phone while the other was listening to music.

Suddenly, Little Wang of the program team came and announced, "Everyone get ready, the auditions are about to begin."

Everyone looked to her.

Little Wang was holding a roster. She explained, "I will start calling names one at a time in a while. When you get called, please proceed into the room where you will sing a cappella for the song you have chosen to perform. If the executive director and the judges feel that there is a need for further screening, you will be asked to sing a designated song."

.....

At the other side.

At the audition venue.

Zhang Ye had returned. He told Little Wang to notify the contestants to get ready. After that, he handed Luo Yu over to another staff member of the program team and said to him, “Bring Teacher Luo to the contestants’ waiting room and add her name on the list of contestants.” Then he told Luo Yu, “Teacher Luo, please get ready.”

When Luo Yu saw the large setup, she felt a bit nervous since she had only ever sung a few lines of a song in the school. She had never, ever before seen and performed in front of such a large setup, but she said, “OK, OK.”

Ha Qiqi asked dumbfounded, “Teacher Zhang, who is this?”

The music consultants also did not understand what was going on. Why did Zhang Ye go out and bring back a person? She even looks fat? And not the least bit good-looking? Her voice was even worse. In Beijing slang, it would be described as: A lousy voice that really sucked.

Zhang Ye smiled and replied, “This is a contestant whom I brought back, but let’s not bother about her for now. Let’s begin the auditions, shall we?”

“OK.” Ha Qiqi raised her voice and called for the staff to get into their positions.

Zhang Ye, Ha Qiqi, Teacher Sun, and Teacher Yan sat at the judges' table which was in fact just a long table. As the preliminary auditions were not the television broadcast auditions, they did not get too particular about how it looked. They just brought over a long table as a temporary measure and put some mineral water bottles or their own teacups on it. There weren't even any name tags displayed.

Zhang Ye said, "Let's begin."

Hearing that, Little Wang standing at the door started to call out names, "Number one, Li Lili."

Soon after, a very fair-skinned girl walked in from outside. When the door closed, she smiled and pretended to be calm as she stood in the center of the room, the microphone in front of her. Then she said, "Good afternoon, judges and teachers, I'm Li Lili, currently a university student. Ever since childhood, I've always liked singing and won my district's annual singing competition and..."

Ha Qiqi interrupted, "Let's first hear your singing."

Li Lili acknowledged, "OK, the song I'm going to sing is call 'Blue Coast.'"

Since this was not a television broadcast, there was no musical accompaniment or a live band playing. Although the effects of a cappella were certainly not better than with music

accompaniment, it was precisely because a cappella would reveal a person's voice characteristics and basic singing abilities that the auditions were held this way. Of course, the contestants were allowed to bring their own instruments and sing while playing. Those capable of playing instruments would get additional points as well in any traditional talent show.

The first contestant started to sing.

As she was probably nervous or not used to singing without musical accompaniment, her singing went slightly off-key at the beginning of the second verse, though she was able to gradually return to the melody by the fourth verse.

Without waiting for her to finish singing, Ha Qiqi acted by observing Zhang Ye's expression and said to the first contestant, "Alright, that's enough, you can go back and wait for the news."

Li Lili voiced her understanding with slight disappointment.

However, Zhang Ye directly told her, "I'm sorry, but there's no need to wait for any news. You sang quite well, but the time being, you did not meet our requirements. Sorry about that."

Li Lili bowed with regret. "Thank you, judges and teachers." Then she left.

Zhang Ye told Ha Qiqi, "We don't have to lead the contestants on. It's meaningless to tell them to wait for the news. Just tell them

upfront whether they passed or failed the auditions so that they won't hold out hope while waiting at home aimlessly. If they had kept their friends and relatives informed but ended up getting a call telling them they had failed, it would only be more troublesome." He would naturally act in accordance with his own style for his program. He did not care how the other program teams handled their processes and how the audition should be carried out. All he knew was that he would do it based on what he felt was right.

Ha Qiqi nodded. "Understood."

Teacher Sun said with some regret, "We heard this child's demo and thought that it wasn't too bad. But her live performance was clearly different from her demo."

Teacher Yan said, "She's probably just too nervous."

Another judge remarked, "Nervousness was just one thing. Her singing also seemed to have some problems."

Ha Qiqi said, "Let's move on to the next person."

The second person.

The fifth person.

The tenth person.

Very quickly, ten contestants had finished their auditions, but apart from just one person who performed at an acceptable level, all the others were less than satisfactory. At least, the expectations were different after listening to their demos. Under the a cappella singing conditions, these contestants' potentials were greatly discounted.

Finally, it was Chang Si's turn to perform.

Ha Qiqi had high expectations of her as she was a seeded contestant.

The other music consultants also focused their attention on her. Their eyes were no longer distracted by other things as they had very high expectations for a good sapling like this person, who could easily compete for first place on any other talent show. Even if she couldn't place first, she would surely be considered in the standard of the top five contestants. Having been in this industry for so many years, the consultants definitely had the ability to spot such talent. Now, it only depended on how she could showcase her potential at the audition performance.

Chang Si was a tall and beautiful lady. Although her figure was not perfect, it was still quite good. She greeted, "Good afternoon, teachers. My name is Chang Si and the song that I'll be singing is 'Woman Flower.'"

As expected, she pulled it off like the professional she was!

When Chang Si started singing, Ha Qiqi and a few of the music consultants immediately nodded several times. This was what you'd call a professional, the true ability of a musician who even when singing a cappella could still sing it very well!

“Woman Flower, swaying in the red dust!”

“Woman Flower, wavering softly in the wind!”

Her singing style was unlike Zhang Yuanqi's and Zhang Xia's as she performed the song in a higher octave. Especially when singing the words “woman flower.” If it were Zhang Yuanqi's version, this part here would carry an alto feeling. This song was not supposed to have any parts where the octave should increase, but because Chang Si managed to grasp the octave change nicely, this part of the song came to a penetrating soprano. Although at the end the last trail of her voice became somewhat shaky and did not stabilize, the overall feeling was still very uplifting.

After she finished singing.

Chang Si looked confidently at the judges.

Ha Qiqi nodded, “Teacher Zhang?”

Several of the music consultants were also very satisfied with her performance.

One of them said, “Although the higher octave singing strayed at

some point and you did not managed to sustain the vibrato, the overall performance was still very good. I propose that she can pass through the audition.”

Teacher Sun seconded, “Me too.”

Teacher Yan concurred, “I agree as well.”

Ha Qiqi also had no doubts about it and felt that she really sang quite well. “I approve too.”

Chang Si had already revealed a smile. “Thank you, judges.”

However at this moment, Zhang Ye looked at her and said, “I’m sorry, you sang very well but it still does not meet my requirements. Please return.”

Chang Si was shocked.

Ha Qiqi was stunned!

Wu Yi was stunned!

Teacher Sun and Teacher Yan were also stunned!

Teacher Sun could not sit still anymore and asked, “Why? Little Chang’s singing was a bit flawed but her flaws did not detract from

her potential. This kind of standard is already quite good. In such an amateur talent contest, she already qualifies as a contestant with very high potential. Surely you cannot try to compare her with the Heavenly Queen's singing ability, right? Those flaws can be tolerated."

Zhang Ye said, "First, her voice didn't have any special characteristics to it. Second, her singing is only at a rather good standard, not an excellent standard yet. Third, 'Woman Flower' is not supposed to be sung in this way. The way she expressed herself did not match the lyrics. Neither is this song supposed to raise octaves. I did not feel too comfortable hearing it forcibly sung that way. The most important factor is that this higher octave singing isn't that good either. There was no feeling. If it's not sung by a woman around thirty or forty years old who has experienced more in life, it becomes very difficult to express 'Woman Flower' in a good manner—those are the reasons why."

Teacher Yan said, "But..."

Chang Si also said, "My soprano is..."

Zhang Ye waved his hand. "Don't say anymore, please go back."

"Please go back then." Although Ha Qiqi could not understand Zhang Ye's decision but she still respected his views. But she was crying inside thinking, what a waste!

Such an outstanding contestant yet she could not even pass the auditions?

Just what kind of a person are you looking for!

Chapter 649 – An Absurd Voice!

The auditions continued.

Although they had their differences in opinions, the auditions still had to go on. No doubt, the few judges—including Ha Qiqi—all agreed on and felt that Chang Si performed very well in every aspect and would qualify from here. But with just a disagreeing vote from Zhang Ye, she was eliminated. Everything still had to be done his way since he was the leader of this panel and the executive director of the show. It didn't matter that everyone else thought that Chang Si was good enough if Zhang Ye did not think so.

Zhang Ye said deadpan, “Next.”

Teacher Sun was about to speak, but hesitated, then finally swallowed his words.

Next up was the promising second-seeded contestant everyone acknowledged—Hu Liangyi.

This person had been singing for many years and was trained in the performing arts, having graduated from a true music college. He had also appeared in many concerts and television programs, honing his singing along the way as a backup singer to several celebrities. His singing could be described as the real thing and would stand up to the test for sure.

Hu Liangyi stepped up.

Ha Qiqi said, “Alright, you may begin.”

Hu Liangyi adjusted the microphone and said, “I’ll be singing ‘Mountains’ for everyone today.”

The song was one of the more well-known ones in this world and was considered a fusion of traditional and pop music. It had a bit of bel canto mixed with traditional folk singing styles and would leave the listener in enjoyment. Hu Liangyi’s voice was quite good and he could sing very steadily in a well-balanced way without sounding rushed. His voice could go high or low as needed. His performance was done in such a textbook manner, without any flaws they could pick on. It was just too perfect!

The song was over.

Ha Qiqi was very excited.

Teacher Sun, Teacher Yan, and the others also perked up at the performance.

One of the music consultants even gave him a thumbs up and said, “It’s so different when it’s a person of the performing arts. You sang well...”

Before he could finish his praise, Zhang Ye had already put down Hu Liangyi’s CV and remarked, “It’s not up to my requirements, please go back.”

What?

Still not up to requirements?

Even this was not OK??

Hu Liangyi immediately widened his eyes and asked, “My singing is not good enough?”

Teacher Sun could no longer bear to listen any further. “Director Zhang, if Hu Liangyi and Chang Si’s performances are not good enough, then we should just scrap the auditions since no one could do better than them anyway.”

Teacher Yan said, “We have all analyzed the strengths of the contestants and these two people are the most outstanding. Even if they might not have the champion’s look, they would still be in the top ten of any other singing talent show. Just what are your requirements? Isn’t the bar set too high?”

Ha Qiqi frowned and looked at Teacher Yan. She said, “Teacher Yan, whether a contestant can qualify or not will be decided by Director Zhang. If he thinks they can’t qualify, then he must have his considerations, so why are you being so outspoken?”

Teacher Yan replied, “But I don’t understand the reasons behind his decisions.”

Teacher Sun agreed, “I can’t understand either. Asking us to come participate and help with the selection, even though we might not be well-known or famous within the industry. We’re still industry veterans, so whether someone can sing or not, wouldn’t we know? These two contestants are obviously quite good, yet they can’t even pass the auditions? I’m not doubting Director Zhang’s professionalism, but when it comes to talent shows and singing, we are definitely professional about it.”

Zhang Ye looked at them and explained, “First off, my new program is made not in accordance to industry standards, nor does it follow the standards of other talent shows. That is why, when I measure someone’s singing to be good or bad, I have a set of my own standards to judge them by. Second, Hu Liangyi’s singing is not bad, but his voice is too common and he uses too many types of singing techniques, with some parts being ‘rich.’ You guys might look at this as singing and onstage performing experience, but in my opinion, there is nothing special about it and no pouring of emotions into the performance. That is why I am not satisfied with the it. Third, you all claim to be professional, but I’m no amateur either. How this program will be done and how the contestants are chosen are all up to me alone. What I need is not an excellent contestant, but someone who is unique and irreproducible by any others!”

Teacher Sun argued, “Voice is too common? This is the first time I’m hearing of anyone using that as a judging standard. What’s the point of using the uniqueness of a voice to make a judgement? I don’t understand at all. In the end, it still boils down to the singing and onstage performing experience.”

Zhang Ye countered, “The name of my program is The Voice of

China. Everyone's understanding of a good voice might be different, so I won't force that on anyone. But as I am the executive director, if you guys don't think that my requirements are better than yours and won't respect the principles and decision of my choices, then please, go back now!"

He said those words with a hint of malice!

This was also the first time Zhang Ye was doing a program with such a headstrong attitude. When he was working on his new programs in the past, a lot of objecting and doubting voices constantly came at him. Each time Zhang Ye was hosting or planning a show, he would have to try to talk and persuade his leaders or colleagues, asking them to put their trust in him, convincing them that doing it his way would be for the best and why it would help to attract more viewers. But all that was unnecessary now that he was the leader of the team. He was the executive director, and having been doubted so often in the past, he was already tired and annoyed by it all. He was getting impatient about having to explain himself to others and instead thought, if you all don't respect my decisions? Then I won't give a damn who you, you, you, or you are! Just get the hell out of here!

Wu Yi was extremely nerve-wracked. "Director Zhang!"

Ha Qiqi also tried to smooth things over. "Director Zhang, the teachers were only just suggesting their opinions, this matter..." If they did not have these music consultants, how would they be able to continue with the auditions!

"Fine then, I'll leave." Teacher Sun was so angry he stood up and

walked away.

When Teacher Yan saw this, he also felt his dignity had been compromised, so he stood up and left together with Old Sun, but not before leaving some parting words. “Fine, I’ll leave too. Since the program doesn’t need the opinions of us professionals, it’s pointless to stay around here!”

The remaining two music consultants looked at each other, hesitated for a bit, then also left.

They knew they were only suppose to be here for a few days to help the program team of The Voice. But who knew that not only were they not appreciated, even their professional advice was refused. You don’t want us to stay? Well then, we don’t care either! We would like to see how well the program’s viewership ratings turn out after its broadcast! How your so-called The Voice will turn out to be!

Talking about voice uniqueness?

Irreproducible?

Bullshit! Based on those requirements, it would be a miracle if you could even qualify a contestant!

At this point, all of the music consultants had left the venue in anger and refused to work.

Zhang Ye told Hu Liangyi, “Please go then, I’m sorry.”

Hu Liangyi could not accept the results at all and said just before he left, “When The Voice starts broadcasting, I will definitely watch it. I want to know what kind of a person would have passed based on your requirements.” In terms of singing, Hu Liangyi was extremely confident of himself. A person like him would surely have some pride in himself.

Zhang Ye did not say a word. He was not against Hu Liangyi at all and knew that his singing was indeed quite good. As to whether Hu Liangyi would become famous in the future or have any developments in the music industry, Zhang Ye didn’t know. But he knew there was definitely no spot for Hu Liangyi on the stage of The Voice. That was something he was certain of.

After quite a number of people had left, the venue of the audition became much quieter.

Ha Qiqi laughed bitterly. “Director Zhang, how do we go on from here out?”

But Zhang Ye responded with a smile instead. He replied, “It’s just us from the program team left now, but that’s also a good thing. Sister Qi, please call the next person in. We will continue with the auditions.”

Ha Qiqi didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. She could only continue with the auditions.

The next contestant was not good either.

The one after that too.

Zhang Ye was becoming disappointed. How could there not even be a good one?

Ha Qiqi and the others from the program team were also feeling very unsettled. There were so many contestants who sang rather well, but why did Zhang Ye not like them at all? Almost half of the first batch of audition contestants had already left, but not one of them caught Zhang Ye's eyes? Just what kind of a voice would he accept as a good voice?

Ha Qiqi said listlessly, "Next."

Little Wang announced to the outside, "[Qian Pingfan](#)."

Qian – Money/Pingfan – Ordinary. This name carries the meaning of being very ordinary in terms of wealth

Zhang Ye clicked on this contestant's demo and played it.

When Ha Qiqi heard it, she said to Zhang Ye, "This girl has a very clear and crisp voice, and it carries a nice, melodious feeling. Overall, I would say it's not bad, but looking at her name, it looks oddly casual. I wonder what her parents were thinking when they gave her this name."

At this moment, the contestant walked into the room.

But when this person appeared in front of those in the room, they were all caught by surprise!

Ha Qiqi asked dumbfounded, “And who might you be?”

It was a young man slightly past 20 who looked very ordinary, with short hair and a sense of style that was incredibly middle of the road. He wore a pair of shoes stained with mud, making him look like a simpleton who had wandered into the room.

The young man look very nervous and stammered, “I, I, am... Qian Pingfan.”

Ha Qiqi nearly fainted. “You’re a guy?”

Qian Pingfan scratched his head. “Ye-yes.”

The song demo Ha Qiqi received only had the candidate’s name and contact number filled out. Other than that, they did not have any more details about the person, just like this contestant standing in front of them.

Ha Qiqi was simply in disbelief. She said, “The demo you sent to us was clearly a girl’s voice. Do you know that you cannot simply take the place of a candidate and come in here for the auditions?”

Qian Pingfan anxiously replied, "That was sung by me."

Technical Director Wu Yi said, "Please go back."

Qian Pingfan was getting very anxious and tried to say, "I, I really..."

"We only request for our contestants to be honest. I don't know who sang in that demo, but from your attitude here today, we clearly see a problem with you already." Ha Qiqi was of course not going to believe that such a clean and crisp female voice had come from a man. Besides, this person was speaking with a very normal voice that belonged to a young man, so how could he be the owner of the voice in the demo?

Qian Pingfan was finding it difficult to explain himself as he continued insisting, "That was really sung by me!"

Ha Qiqi directly said, "Little Wang, call for the next contestant."

But at this moment, a slightly disappointed and dejected Zhang Ye suddenly spoke up, "Wait a moment." Then, he looked at the contestant and said, "Why don't you introduce yourself a little first?"

That person immediately answered, "My name is Qian Pingfan and I'm 22 years old this year. My hometown is in Shanxi but I'm currently living in Beijing. My occupation is...I repair bicycles with my master over at Lishuiqiao Station. We repair bicycles for others

over there.”

What?

Repair bicycles?

Everyone: “...”

Zhang Ye, seemingly not too interested about his occupation, began adjusting the volume louder for the demo playing on the computer. He pointed and asked, “Are you sure that this was sung by you?”

Qian Pingfan gave a firm nod. “Yes!”

Ha Qiqi doubted, “You must have used voice changing software, right?”

“No, I really didn’t!” Qian Pingfan argued.

Zhang Ye was becoming much more interested. He stopped Ha Qiqi and the others from raising any more doubts and told Qian Pingfan, “Alright then, can you sing something for us?”

Seeing this chance, Qian Pingfan was also feeling excited. “Sure, sure. I’m going to sing ‘Wishing We Last Forever.’” Perhaps he had the thought that this song would get him into Zhang Ye’s good books, but being rather bashful, he could only constantly shake his

head in embarrassment, though he did not change his chosen song and determinedly went ahead with this “opportunistic” song. Actually, he had changed it to this song only because he had overheard the other contestants discussing it as a strategy, in hopes that it would increase their chances of passing the audition.

Zhang Ye looked at him. “Begin.”

Qian Pingfan took a deep breath and was about to sing, but lost his composure. Holding his chest tightly, he took another deep breath to suppress his nerves before his voice came out.

When the first verse was sung, all of the staff at the audition venue were dumbfounded!

“When will the moon be clear and bright?”

“With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky.”

“In the heavens on this night,”

“I wonder what season it would be?”

Little Wang’s jaw dropped!

Wu Yi also looked like he had seen a ghost!

Ha Qiqi and the others were all staring at the contestant in disbelief!

Holy shit!

It was a female voice!

It really was a female voice!

Qian Pingfan sounded quite normal when he spoke, but when he started singing, it somehow turned into an extremely soft and gentle female voice, a voice that could be described as more womanly than a woman's voice!

He did not lie!

The sample sent to them was really sung by him!

It was sung by a man!

If they did not know that the microphone and speaker were untampered, Ha Qiqi would definitely have thought that his voice was going through some voice changing software. Right now, she felt her world had collapsed as she looked at Qian Pingfan's face while listening to his singing voice. She would never have thought that there would be such a person even if she were threatened with death!

Moreover, the key point that also left Ha Qiqi wondering was how she did not find it too shocking. If the contestant did not sing well or did not sing like a woman, or even deliberately imitated a transvestite's type of voice, Ha Qiqi would surely break out in goosebumps and not get used to it. But somehow, this Qian Pingfan's singing was just too womanly, as though his voice had been switched with a real woman's. On top of that, he did not have any sort of expression that made him look like he was forcing the emotions of the song to show. The look and demeanor of a unconfident simpleton earlier had now turned into one of concentration and unembarrassed confidence as he held the microphone and sang. It felt very natural—and perhaps that was why Ha Qiqi did not find it so shocking.

Very quickly, the performance was over.

Qian Pingfan put down the microphone and pulled himself out from the song, becoming a shy guy once more. He would turn his head here and there, touching his nose a little and looking like he did not know where to place his arms and legs.

Ha Qiqi rubbed her forehead and could only muster up, “Oh my god.”

Wu Yi gazed at Qian Pingfan like he was a fairy.

Qian Pingfan was getting embarrassed from all the looks he was attracting. “Teachers, if it's not OK, then I have to get going. I came out today secretly and did not inform my master.”

Zhang Ye laughed, “Then you better be prepared to go back late today.”

Qian Pingfan was taken aback. “Why?”

Zhang Ye answered, “Because you’ll need to fill in some forms and we’ll have to brief you on the details of the competition rules and what to look out for during the recording of the show.”

When those words were said, everyone was astounded!

Zhang Ye looked at him and complimented, “Congratulations! You’ve passed the audition!”

He finally found one!

This was exactly the type of voice this bro wanted!

Chapter 650 – Why'd You Get An Old Man Here For?

He passed?

A contestant finally passed the audition?

Everyone in the program team were stunned by Qian Pingfan's voice, but at the same time, were even more stunned by Director Zhang's decision.

Qian Pingfan also felt the same!

He was so surprised he asked, "What? I qualified?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Yes."

Qian Pingfan pointed to himself, eyes wide. "Really? Me?"

"Yes, really, you," Zhang Ye replied.

"This, I, I...I thank you, thank you, Teacher Zhang. Thank you, teachers!" Qian Pingfan was speaking incoherently due to his excitement. He had come to the audition because he wanted to change his life and had a dream of becoming a star. With the hopes of giving it a try, he downloaded a singing app onto his phone and recorded a short demo that was just average in quality and sent it to the program team via email. Who could've guessed that they

would inform him the very next day of the auditions, and right now, he was even told by the famous Zhang Ye himself that he had passed the audition. This excitement was simply indescribable with words!

Zhang Ye asked, “Did you bring your ID?”

“Yes, I brought it!” Qian Pingfan quickly replied.

Zhang Ye called a staff member over and got him to take Qian Pingfan to register himself and then brief him on the preparations for the show. After doing that, Zhang Ye was also unable to conceal the joy he felt. Having held auditions for almost half of the contestants for the first day of open calls, none of them were satisfactory to him and lot of time was wasted. But just the appearance of Qian Pingfan alone was enough to make up for it all. This was exactly the type of good voice he was looking for!

However, Ha Qiqi was unsure of what was going on. She said, “Director Zhang.”

“Yes?” Zhang Ye looked at her.

Ha Qiqi said, “About this, he doesn’t have any professional music training and has never been onstage before. He’s just a bicycle repairman. Will it be fine to put him onstage and on television?”

Zhang Ye replied, “Our program’s motto states that we don’t judge looks or occupation.”

Because of how several of those music consultants were chased away earlier, Ha Qiqi was also very careful with her words. She delivered, “But I personally feel that even though Qian Pingfan’s voice is very unique, wouldn’t it also be considered a little odd? He’s a man who sings in a woman’s voice. Will the audience accept that? Of course, even though I think it’s acceptable, we do not know if the audience will accept it. That voice will be too controversial.”

Wu Yi added, “It’s literally unheard of.”

Another female editor also nodded. “Yes, that voice is truly an odd one.”

Zhang Ye smiled and explained, “That’s exactly what I’m looking for in the contestants. It’s good that Qian Pingfan has appeared. Using him, I can finally show you all a live example of what I’m looking for. In terms of voice uniqueness, emotions put into singing, and the irreproducibility of it all, Qian Pingfan demonstrates all of those characteristics quite well. That is the type of contestant we should be looking for. I am not afraid of controversy, in fact, I’m afraid we aren’t being controversial enough. Something all audiences can agree on and accept does not exist at all.” Then he reaffirmed his decision, “Regarding Qian Pingfan, we will put our focus on him from here on out.”

Ha Qiqi could only nod at this. “OK.”

Zhang Ye said, “Next contestant.”

Little Wang went out to call the next contestant in.

One contestant.

Two contestants.

Another six contestants in a row were eliminated.

When the next person after that came in, everyone was left confused for a moment. It was a young man in his twenties, with rather tanned skin and a very tall build. He was a burly man who couldn't be described as ugly, but was just normal-looking and a very average person.

That person went to the microphone and spoke into it, "My name is Sun Daxuan and I am a train driver."

Ha Qiqi asked, "What song will you be performing today?"

"It's called 'Please Fall In Love With Me,'" Sun Daxuan answered.

When they heard the title, everyone's expressions turned strange. "Please Fall In Love With Me"? This was an old song from more than a decade ago. It was one of the famous songs by a [Greater China](#) celebrity. Although this celebrity was no longer

popular due to his works not catching on, and also hardly appeared on television and entertainment news anymore, the song's popularity was still very widespread. Even now, this song would be a default choice when people went to sing at a karaoke box. As it was meant to be a slow and soothing love song, none of those present at the audition expected such a burly man to choose it as his performance piece.

Zhang Ye said, "Begin then."

Sun Daxuan cleared his throat and narrowed his eyes, then lightly began his singing.

"Hey...Hello...It's me."

"Hey...Please...Love me."

Sometimes it sounded gentle. Sometimes it meandered. Sometimes the vibrato was strong. And, sometimes, it was deeply soulful.

If this song were sung by any other pretty boy or a younger looking man, the image would surely be beautiful, with young love an especially harmonious scene. However, with the looks of this Sun Daxuan who was a train driver, it was a total mismatch to the lyrics of the song. Although his singing was very emotional and flawless, the image that they were looking at gave them a really odd feeling. It didn't match, or maybe it couldn't be said to not match but rather was too much of a contrast! The only thing worth mentioning was that this person was really owning it today. When

they listened to his demo, they only felt that his singing was very soulful and emotional. But when he performed it live in front of them, those feelings intensified. Along with his confidence in performing, he even looked quite comfortable standing there in the center of the room, though they didn't know if he was exceeding his usual performance levels or if he had always been at this level.

He finished singing.

Sun Daxuan looked on at the judges helplessly.

Ha Qiqi looked to Zhang Ye and asked, "What do you think of this person?"

Zhang Ye returned, "What do you all think?"

Ha Qiqi laughed, "Should I speak the truth?"

"Then would you rather tell some lies?" Zhang Ye was tickled by this.

"Well, I think it's fine. There's not much of a stage presence, no celebrity feel, probably not someone who would become famous. Although, I do think that the love song was performed very well," Ha Qiqi answered.

Wu Yi said, "Not too bad."

A female editor said, “It’s OK.”

They were actually quite hesitant of Sun Daxuan, knowing that it wouldn’t matter whether they passed or failed him. If they compared him to Chang Si or Hu Liangyi’s level, they would definitely not let him pass. At least, if they were the judges, they would choose Chang Si and Hu Liangyi rather than him. The reason for that was because their mindset was still stuck in the traditional thinking. If a person’s looks passed and they had the X factor, then even if their voice was average, as long as they could sing well enough, those would be the points they used to judge. For someone like Qian Pingfan who was male but sang in a female’s voice or this burly train driver’s gentle and emotional love song, they still could not quite accept it.

But somehow, for whatever reason, Zhang Ye’s views always differed from theirs. He only said one thing, “Being able to sing a love song is not easy in and of itself. Sometimes, a man compared to a woman, a burly person compared to a pretty face, when the former of each sings well, they carry much stronger emotions across to the listener. So I’ll let him pass.”

Ha Qiqi, “...”

Fine, whatever, you’re the executive director anyway. If you say so, then so be it.

The program team staff were already feeling helpless about Zhang Ye’s decisions. They gradually understood Zhang Ye’s

routine, which could be summarized into two words—seeking novelty.

The more they believed a contestant could not make it?

The more Zhang Ye thought they could!

Following that were another series of auditions.

One after another, contestants entered the room, performed a song, and left the room, over and over again.

A couple of times, when Ha Qiqi and the other program team staff thought they had spotted a promising contestant, Zhang Ye rejected them all. This left everyone unsure of what to say as it seemed like Zhang Ye specifically preferred those who worked blue-collar jobs, did not have good looks, or had odd voices. He didn't look for any other qualities than those?

For other talent shows, the preliminary auditions had a good passing rate as they still weren't the televised auditions yet, so it shouldn't be too stringent. As long as a contestant was average, they would be let through to the next round. When they got to the next round where the blind auditions were held, the difficult decision of whether they were good enough or not would be left to the four coaches. At most, they would have to edit out any footage of those contestants who were really terrible but somehow managed to sneak past the preliminary auditions. Why would they

need to be so strict in the preliminary auditions round? They could not understand it. As they were nearing the end of the day's auditions, they knew that if this were any other singing talent show, more than a dozen contestants would have already passed, yet what was the number for them? They had only let two contestants through! And they were even the extremely odd ones!

But Zhang Ye still went about doing things his own way and did not lower his selection criteria. Actually, he understood clearly that they needed to find some contestants who were good-looking and could sing well or others who were not as outstanding, just to make up the numbers. But at the same time, Zhang Ye also knew that such contestants were not difficult to find at all. For example, you could throw a brick into a crowd and easily hit someone like Chang Si or Hu Liangyi, so his main task right now was not to search for these “green leaf” contestants who could easily be found. Since he was spending time here at the scene of the audition today, he prioritized finding those contestants who would serve as the red flowers of the program. The program team staff thought that Zhang Ye was being capricious and lacking consideration, but little did they know that he considered much more than any one of them had. He already had it all planned out!

Time was ticking away.

Finally, at around 3 PM in the afternoon, other than Luo Yu who was brought here by Zhang Ye, there was only one last contestant for the day's audition.

Ha Qiqi said, “The next person is the last one.”

Zhang Ye nodded in acknowledgment.

The door opened and the last contestant entered.

The moment they saw this person, everyone had a vision of ten thousand lines of “what the f**k” flying in front of their eyes. When the program team requested for the contestants to submit their demos when applying for the auditions, they were told to include their self-introductions as well. But if they did not write it or forgot about it, there was nothing the program team could do. This was why the program team was quite clueless about some of the contestants’ details, just like how this last contestant for the day turned out. No one could have expected it at all!

The person who entered the room was an old man!

It was an old man who must have been around sixty years old!

Half of his hair was already white and combed all the way back. He was wearing a rather fashionable leather jacket and a pair of jeans full of holes. His jeans weren’t torn from age, rather deliberately styled that way.

Ha Qiqi gaped, flabbergasted. “Grandpa, are you a contestant too?”

The old man answered in high spirits, “Yes, my name is Zhou Danian.”

A female editor asked dumbfounded, “May I ask how old you are?”

“Haha, I’m 59 this year, still young, still young, Zhou Danian chuckled.

Wu Yi nearly fainted at this, wondering how 59 years old was still considered young. My father’s only 58 this year! He already has symptoms of cerebral thrombosis and struggles to walk around! You’re even older than my father by a year!

Ha Qiqi could not believe it. She asked, “Was the demo sent in by you? Did you sing that?”

Zhou Danian replied with vitality, “That was me alright.”

“But the demo was for a rock song.” Ha Qiqi could not accept it. When she had a look at the contestants waiting room earlier, she remembered seeing him, but did not think of him as one of the contestants. She just thought that he was a family member of a contestant who might have been underage and felt that he might have been a father or a grandfather. But who knew that this old man who was almost sixty had indeed turned out to be here for the audition!

However, Zhou Danian only laughed and spoke, “The song I will be performing for you all is a rock song too, may I start now?”

Ha Qiqi said, “Sure, sure, please go ahead.”

Little Wang felt a little bad for him, so she offered, “Grandpa, why don’t I get you a chair?”

“No need. I’m still strong and healthy.” Zhou Danian held the microphone, and without even preparing, suddenly roared into it!

“Wind!!!”

Whoa!

Everyone was shocked at the opening. The loud and hoarse voice had set the entire venue on fire as the female editor pressed her hands over her ears while Ha Qiqi and the others started in their seats. It was not because they were shocked by the loud voice but because they were afraid that this old grandpa would get a brain hemorrhage or a heart attack from his own shouting! This was a rock song! Can an old man like you take it? Don’t risk your life like this!

But Zhou Danian was just getting into the mood!

“Wind!

“Gusting all around!

“Snow!

“Squalling till it’s gone!

“Rain!”

This was a little known song barely any of those present had ever heard. It could be considered an older rock song, one that carried a bit of heavy metal in it. It was basically a rock song that depended on the vocalist to employ [screaming](#) to sing the song. It could be seen just how hard Zhou Danian was trying. In just a short while, his forehead was dripping with beads of sweat!

Ha Qiqi was already in no mood to listen anymore. She wanted to go up to call a stop to it as she was worried that, before The Voice could even start broadcasting, news of a contestant dying of cardiac arrest would make the headlines first!

But somehow, Zhang Ye was listening to it in a most serious manner. Not only was he serious, his eyes appeared increasingly brighter by the moment. This old man really sang very well. Although his voice sounded somewhat dry and the high notes cracked at certain parts, it didn’t matter since it was rock and voice cracking was allowed! Other than those points, the old man did not have any other problems in his singing and was even quite remarkable. His outburst of emotions was full on and almost every verse of the song poured his feelings out. Of the song’s rhythm, it might not seem difficult to a younger person nor was there anything to pick on, but for a 60-year-old man, Zhang Ye was more particular about the contestant’s sense of rhythm. He felt that this contestant had done very well in this area and was definitely comparable to the young ones. In fact, parts of the lyrics and high-pitched singing, if sung by a younger person, would have just been

that. But when it came out from the mouth of a 60-year-old man full of life experience and wisdom, it sounded particularly different. The impact of those lyrics was much greater! It was more intense!

What a surprise!

This was really another unexpected surprise!

This rock song sounded better and better as they listened!

When the performance was over, Zhou Danian was panting heavily, though he looked to be fine and still in high spirits. He said, “Teachers, did I do well? Do I qualify?”

Zhang Ye suddenly asked, “How is your condition and health?”

Zhou Danian answered, “No problems at all.”

“Don’t try to brush it off. I want to know the specific conditions you have,” Zhang Ye said in a serious and firm voice.

Zhou Danian replied honestly, “I do have slightly high blood sugar, but other than that, I’m doing well. My blood pressure is stable and I’ve been jogging everyday to increase my lung capacity.”

Ha Qiqi didn’t know how to react. “Grandpa, you’re already so

old, why do you still think of coming to take part in this talent show? If we had known you were already at this age, we wouldn't have asked you to come to the auditions."

Wu Yi was already thinking of getting him to hurry back home. Seeing him rocking to a song like this, they were all trembling with fright that he would just faint right there and then!

Zhou Danian was having none of it. "So what if I'm at this age? I'll tell you something, young lady. Why don't we compete on our lung capacities? I believe that many of you here would not be stronger than me in terms of our lung capacities."

Ha Qiqi did not know how to react to this, she just knew they had to reject him. Have you ever seen any other talent show with a 60-year-old contestant before? Wouldn't this be crazy? Although their program did say that age didn't matter, it was possible to be too old as well. Someone in their forties would have been fine, someone in their fifties would be pushing it, but you're already close to sixty now and half your hair has also turned white. Who would risk letting you compete in their talent show? No matter how you put it, it was still ultimately a stage for the youngsters!

How should they reject him?

He's already at such an advanced age, so would it be alright to tell him as it was?

But he looks so confident. If they straight told him, would it deal a blow to him? He had better not get a heart attack from the

rejection! Whatever, the dirty work of rejecting the old man should just be left to Zhang Ye to handle. He's the executive director anyway.

Ha Qiqi kept quiet.

The other program team staff all looked at Zhang Ye.

Sure enough, only Zhang Ye stood up to say something. He told the old man, "Grandpa, you're much older than my father and our competition is really quite physically demanding too. I think you'd agree you can't handle it?"

Ha Qiqi nodded inside her head. Right, just refuse him mildly and not be too direct with the rejection.

Zhou Danian immediately responded, "Physically demanding? It's no big deal to me at all. I'm still going strong, and whatever a youngster can do, I can do it too. I have never once thought that I'm older than any of you, so no matter how intense the competition gets, I can get through it. It's not a problem at all!"

Oh come on, you're still refusing to take our advice?

This old man was being too stubborn.

Ha Qiqi and the others were all wondering, if Director Zhang's mild rejection did not get through to him, then how should it be handled? Was it better to just put it plainly to him?

As expected, Zhang Ye gave it to him very plainly.

Zhang Ye stayed standing and said with a smile, “Grandpa Zhou, since you claim that your body is fine and that you can get through this intense competition, then I have nothing else to say. I hereby formally announce: you’ve passed the auditions and I insist that you join our competition, The Voice of China! On behalf of our program team, I welcome you!”

Zhou Danian stumbled back a bit and immediately broke out into a big smile, “I’ve qualified? Hahaha!”

However, the program team staff were all astounded. They were so shocked they felt like just laying down on the ground under the tables!

What?

The old man qualified?!

What the f**k!

Ha Qiqi nearly vomited blood!

Wu Yi and the other staff’s eyes shrank!

Director Zhang, weren’t you going to refuse him politely? Yet it

turned out that you were not going to reject him! It turned out instead to be that you were only asking the old man to be clear about his condition and health issues before allowing him to proceed to the televised blind auditions round? But...but this is an old man who's 60 years old! Have you ever seen an old man taking part in any singing talent show before? We're holding selections for The Voice of China, not The Old Man of China! What sort of mess are you trying to create by getting an old man to join the competition!

Chapter 651 – I Teach Physical Education!

The old man was taken away to fill out some forms.

Left at the scene of the audition were a group of people from the staff of The Voice, all looking shocked.

Ha Qiqi could no longer just sit around and keep quiet anymore. She knew of Zhang Ye's temper and also knew that he was the executive director. Even if all the decision-making in passing or failing a contestant was up to him, she still had to say something about it, because if this was not handled properly, it could turn out to be a very serious problem. She asked, "Director Zhang, are you really serious about letting the grandpa on to the show? Why don't you reconsider. That really isn't doable. He's too advanced in age. If anything happens, the people responsible will be those of us at Central TV. You should know that Central TV Department 1's broadcast coverage is nationwide and even airs on some overseas channels, so this pressure is not something that everyone can take. I've even seen many youngsters who look very healthy and strong faint during program recordings due to anxiety. This has happened so many times just in Central TV alone, and they're even young people, so let's not mention what would happen to a 60-year-old grandpa!"

Wu Yi wiped away his sweat. "Yes, Director Zhang."

Assistant Director Zhang Zuo also came over to the audition venue after finishing his work. When he heard that Zhang Ye had let a 60-year-old grandpa through the auditions, he too very nearly fainted. He hurriedly stepped forward and said, "Teacher Zhang,

you must never, ever, ever do that. If something happens, then it will cause big trouble!”

Zhang Ye laughed, “That’s why I asked him about his health first.”

Ha Qiqi immediately interjected, “He might have said that he is all well and good, but that doesn’t guarantee anything. Aren’t there exceptions?”

Zhang Zuo said in panic, “We can’t take such a risk. Tha-that’s really too dangerous.”

“What’s so dangerous? Are you all taking the elderly to be too weak?” Zhang Ye disagreed. “I agree that being cautious is correct, but an elderly person is still a person. They have things they like as well as dreams to chase after. No one has the right to take that away from them. You guys have seen it for yourself too, the grandpa isn’t in bad shape at all. He’s still very strong and able. How could he perform a rock song like that otherwise? So why don’t we not take Grandpa Zhou to be just the typical old man, alright?”

Ha Qiqi replied, “But there’s never been any case of an old man on a talent show before.”

When she said that, many of the program team staff at the side couldn’t help but snigger.

Zhang Ye chuckled. “If other programs don’t have that, then we’ll have it. The programs I make have never aimed to be the same as others. To me, there’s no difference whether it’s an old or a young person. Since we’ve already said that we would not look at their ages, then we shouldn’t judge them based on that!”

Ha Qiqi: “...”

Zhang Zuo: “...”

No one else said anything.

Zhang Ye added, “I don’t see a problem with Grandpa Zhou. In fact, I think we should give him more focus. I believe that all of you were too concerned with his age earlier and did not listen to his singing, right? Grandpa Zhou’s style of rock, that scream, that attitude to life—those are all things a young person can’t express through their singing. The feeling it gives to me...can only be described as shocking! It was that great!”

Ha Qiqi wondered, “Was that so? I didn’t notice it.”

Wu Yi and the others also weren’t listening attentively back then.

“That performance was recorded. I’ll show it to you all again later.” Zhang Ye said, “But for now, let’s not talk about it. We’ll just settle it this way!”

With those words, it didn't matter if there were any more objections.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others could only look at each other helplessly. They knew better than to say more. Whatever, if it's settled, then it's settled. We'll just do it however you decide, hai.

Qian Pingfan.

Sun Daxuan.

Zhou Danian.

In the first round of the preliminary auditions, three people had qualified for the next round.

At this time, Ha Qiqi thought of someone else who had come. She said, "Oh right, Director Zhang, didn't you bring a woman here earlier? Is she a contestant too? How's she?"

Zhang Ye smiled and answered, "You'll know when you hear her sing."

Little Wang blinked. "Then, should I?"

"Call Teacher Luo in," Zhang Ye said.

Little Wang went out to get her. She knew that this person was brought here specifically by Zhang Ye, so they might have known each other beforehand. Because of that, Little Wang was more polite to Luo Yu than she was to the other contestants.

The door opened.

Luo Yu walked in with a gust of wind following her—because she was fat.

Faced with a contestant like that, with looks that wouldn't have passed most auditions, the program team's staff no longer cared anymore as they were already numb to it. In the past, they used their own understanding and expectations when it came to such kinds of auditions. But today, after Zhang Ye had overturned their cognitive understanding over and over again, they were no longer bothered by any surprises. Even if a mute person walked in now for the auditions and was given a pass by Zhang Ye, they wouldn't have any reaction. Because to them, Zhang Ye's criteria for picking a contestant was really not something that they could understand at all!

Luo Yu looked to the left and the right, then said, "Teacher Zhang, what now?"

Zhang Ye said, "Oh, you may begin singing now."

"Alright then." Luo Yu did some warm-ups by flexing and stretching her arms, and then by kicking out her legs a few times.

Zhang Zuo: "..."

Ha Qiqi was wondering to herself what was up with this person? Warm-ups? But these warm-ups were too much, weren't they? Were you getting ready to sing or to throw a shot put? Does singing require this kind of warm-up?

All the other staff also came to a conclusion. As expected, it was another odd one!

Other contestants might clear their throats or do some light singing to open up their throats. But Luo Yu was different from other people. Due to her profession as a physical education teacher, she was more used to such a way of warming up. Perhaps for her, this was a way to relieve the stress, to move around a bit more to take the edge off and get into the best condition. So whether she was going to sing or throw a shot put, this had always been Luo Yu's standard warm-up routine.

Exhaling, Luo Yu said, "The song I want to sing is 'Wishing We Last Forever.'"

This song again?

There were already four or five people who had sung this song today.

No one said anything and just sat there quietly, ready to listen. They were curious about how different this contestant who

Teacher Zhang Ye had brought would be.

Then Luo Yu started singing.

When her voice came out, everyone immediately understood how she was different from all the others!

“When will the moon be clear and bright?”

“With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky.”

“In the heavens on this night...”

It turned out to be such a raspy and rough voice. The roughness and friction that her voice brought out gave people goosebumps. This woman was actually singing in an old man’s voice!

Luo Yu’s voice was the direct opposite of Qian Pingfan’s voice, although still with some differences. Qian Pingfan was a male singing in a female voice and his singing was much better than a woman would have sung. But Luo Yu was different; her voice was very deep and very rich. It sounded like a male voice yet there was still a hint of a woman’s charm in it. On top of that, the emotions in the voice were no doubt a woman’s. As long as their eyes were closed, they could still tell that it was a woman singing, only that her voice was somewhat rough.

Ha Qiqi gave a long sigh. I knew it, I just knew it!

Wu Yi also facepalmed himself and rubbed his forehead for a long time!

Why?

Why was it all these kinds of people!

Teacher Zhang, can't you find someone normal? Just one will do! A man singing in a woman's voice, a burly man singing a soft love song, an old man rocking it out with his performance, a woman singing in a man's voice. This was a competition of who was the strangest!

But Zhang Ye quietly listened in appreciation, as though he did not notice the speechlessness of those around him. He really liked Luo Yu's singing, not only because of her extremely unique voice but also the way she handled the song. Even if her voice was raspy, she was able to keep the softness and delicate feel of the song and expressed it in her own way that was different from others! Voice, singing, emotions—all of these were flawlessly expressed. It was like an uncut piece of jade, devoid of any complex singing techniques but leaving people very comfortable listening to it.

This was what you'd call a good contestant!

In the future, for whichever coach chose her, she would definitely be one of the key members of that team!

Yes, even Qian Pingfan and Zhou Danian were the same, but as for Sun Daxuan the train driver, he still wasn't quite as good compared to them, but he was still good anyway and would definitely pass the blind auditions!

On this first day, four seeded contestants had qualified. Looking at the statistics, it might look like a poor qualification rate, but Zhang Ye was already extremely satisfied with the outcome as he had uncovered some gems. To him, the numbers did not matter. What was important was their quality. If he had wanted to just make up the contestant numbers, he could easily get it done, but to have found these “red flower” contestants, it was really one in a million. Each and every one of them were treasured finds. And just like Zhang Ye had predicted, although there were some differences in this world's recognition of what a good singer was, there were still some good voices in it. There were still talented people around, which made Zhang Ye hopeful and expectant of many hitherto undiscovered prospects. Right now, Zhang Ye could finally thump his chest assertively, knowing that The Voice he had brought over and reproduced from his previous world would really have no problems at all!

Luo Yu finished singing.

Everyone stayed silent for a long time.

Luo Yu seemingly got hooked on her own singing, even suggesting to do another one. “Why don't I give ‘Woman Flower’ a try too?”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “Teacher Luo, there's no need. I

hereby announce that you have passed the audition and qualify for the next round as our fourth-seeded contestant. Congratulations.”

Luo Yu said happily, “Then I...Does that mean I can appear on television then?”

Zhang Ye gave her confirmation. “We will be starting the program recording in some days.”

With regards to Zhang Ye’s decision this time, Ha Qiqi and the rest did not find it surprising at all. They knew at this point that they just had to go along with whatever Zhang Ye decided.

But hearing Zhang Ye’s words, Ha Qiqi got a hint of surprise and immediately asked, “Director Zhang, this Teacher Luo is? From a school? Or?” Hearing Director Zhang address her as a teacher, Ha Qiqi’s first thought was that it was her profession.

Zhang Ye affirmed, “Yes, she’s from a school. She’s a teacher of a relative of mine.”

A real teacher?

That’s great!

When everyone in the program team heard this, they finally managed to regain some of their composure. A music teacher from a school, no matter what, would still be considered a professional musician. At last, there was a professional, even if her voice was a

little...Well, regardless, at least she had given the program team a shot of confidence. Compared to those other contestants who had qualified, Luo Yu's profession as a teacher was really comforting and reassuring to know!

Ha Qiqi casually spoke, "Teacher Luo, you'll still have to teach normally, won't you? Our program recording schedule can take up to a day sometimes. Hopefully it won't delay your classes and inconvenience the students."

Luo Yu laughed and replied, "I'm not too busy usually."

Zhang Zuo smiled and said, "That's true, a music teacher has a lighter workload than a teacher teaching the sciences."

Hearing that, Luo Yu was taken aback. "Huh? What music teacher?"

Ha Qiqi was also a bit stunned. "Aren't you teaching music at the school?"

Luo Yu nearly fainted. "What? I teach physical education!"

Ah?

You teach physical education??

Everyone: ".....#\$%^&*(!!!"

Teacher!

A respected teaching professional had finally joined the competition, but how the f**k did it turn out to be a physical education teacher!

At this moment, only the image of a beautiful creature called the [Grass Mud Horse](#) could be used to describe everyone's feelings. They could no longer see the future of their new program as it became enshrouded in pure darkness!

Chapter 652 – The Four “Wonders”!

Later that afternoon.

After the first round of preliminary auditions ended.

Zhang Ye gathered Ha Qiqi and the others and started going through the demos sent to them with email. Although today’s audition had ended, they were still going to have another round tomorrow or the day after, and thus needed to sort out the contestants to notify them to come for the auditions. For those candidates who lived further away, if they really had the potential to qualify, the program team would have to be responsible for their plane or train tickets, covering their return trip as well.

“Come, everyone have a look at this.”

“I will be in charge of these 100 candidates.”

“Leave this page to me.”

“Alright, if there’s any demo that’s good, let me know. I’ll listen to it as well.”

“Hey, Teacher Zhang, this one sounds good, come and listen.”

“Let me take a look.”

“Will this person do?”

“Sounds quite good, notify her.”

“Director Zhang, I found one who’s quite good as well.”

“Coming.”

They kept busy for a full two hours and only managed to go through about a fifth of the applications. There was nothing they could do about it as there were far too many candidates. If it was said that people did not have much optimism for The Voice of China before, but after landing the Brain Gold title sponsorship and with the four famous music coaches coming aboard, the applications increased severalfold. It was an unprecedented number three or four times more than those of other similar talent shows. This was due to the fact that none of them ever had such a prestigious lineup of coaches and such an astronomical title sponsorship fee. The first move made by The Voice of China had already cast all thoughts of other similar talent show programs far from the minds of the audiences!

Ring, ring. A phone call came in.

Zhang Ye answered. “Director Jiang.”

On the line was the deputy director of Central TV Department 1, Jiang Yuan. He said, “Little Zhang, why did I hear that you have chased away four of the music consultants I appointed to your

team?”

Zhang Ye laughed and replied, “Director, it wasn’t that they were chased off, it’s just because we did not see eye to eye with the concept and requirement, so they were not of much help in the picking of contestants. Since it was that way, I thought that it would be better to just handle it on my own. At most I will have to attend every round of the preliminary auditions and spend a little more time. It’s not a big deal.”

Jiang Yuan could not say anything to that, so he just told him, “Alright then, I won’t be bothering with this matter then. But I’ll still say the same thing: I want results, and that means the viewership ratings.”

Zhang Ye said, “I understand.”

“How many people qualified from today’s auditions?” Jiang Yuan asked concerned.

“Four contestants,” Zhang Ye said.

Jiang Yuan reacted in shock. “So few?”

Zhang Ye said, “But they’re all the most excellent ones.”

Jiang Yuan said, “Fine, I will just wait for your good news.”

After hanging up, Zhang Ye looked at his watch and gathered everyone again. He said, “Let’s stop here for today, it’s about time to leave anyway. Thank you for your hard work, everyone.”

“Huu.”

“It’s no trouble.”

“It’s our job, Director Zhang.”

Everyone could finally take a breather and relax as they got ready to leave work.

Zhang Ye was a workaholic and in other times, he wouldn’t even be getting ready to knock off at 7 PM. Sometimes he would even work until 8 or 9 PM, but today, he was the first to leave. 20 minutes before the official end-of-work time, Zhang Ye had already left. This was because there was still a little one waiting for him at school. He had to rush to the Experimental Primary School to pick up Chenchen. If he were late, she would surely be unhappy.

When Zhang Ye left, everyone started talking to each other without needing to hold back anymore.

Zhang Zuo sighed, “Tell me honestly, do you guys think that these contestants can make it?”

Wu Yi gave a forced smile. “I don’t know, but i suppose Teacher Zhang has his own considerations.”

“Ai, I don’t know what to say anymore.” Ha Qiqi said while pinching her brow. “I just hope it works out by some miracle.” Having said that, even she did not believe that this miracle would happen!

Everyone was looking at each other with worried faces!

Some of the program team staff even had expressions that seemed to say “we’re screwed!”

With regards to the chosen contestants today, everyone had great doubts. They’d seen odd ones, but never such strange ones before!

Qian Pingfan.

Sun Daxuan.

Zhou Danian.

Luo Yu.

These four “wonders,” each one more “amazing” than the other!

.....

After work.

The lights in the office of The Voice's program team blinked out as everyone dispersed and proceeded downstairs.

In the elevator, Assistant Director Zhang Zuo bumped into a friend from his previous program team. The two of them had known each other for quite some years now.

That person greeted, "Old Zuo."

Zhang Zuo said, "Ai, it's Old Yu."

That person asked, "How's it going? Have you finished busying yourself with the equipment work yet? I heard that your program team has spent more than 20 million on purchasing new equipment?"

Zhang Zuo said, "Yeah, we bought a bunch of equipment. They should be delivered within the next 2 days."

That person said, "Heh, your team is really rich, but that can't be helped with a 100 million title sponsorship. Even if you all just spent it recklessly, it would take a long time to deplete those funds. Just look at the program team that I'm in, they're so petty. We only exceeded the budget by tens of thousands of yuan, but the leader has already curbed our spending with immediate effect. We're not as lucky as your team, getting whatever you want." Then he paused before suddenly asking, "Oh right, didn't they hold auditions for your program today?"

When he heard that, Zhang Zuo's expression changed into something slightly unnatural. He replied, "Ahem, yeah, I guess it was."

That person asked, "What do you mean by 'I guess it was'? How did it turn out? How many good ones were there? When I walked passed the venue earlier, I spotted a very pretty one. She was dressed in red and had big, round eyes. Did she get through to the next round?"

Zhang Zuo said, "No."

That person asked, "Then which ones did you all choose?"

Zhang Zuo mumbled, "I'm not in charge of that, so I'm not too sure either."

That person didn't believe him. "You're an AD. Even if you weren't in charge of that, you would still know something, wouldn't you?"

Zhang Zuo coughed, "I really don't know."

.....

Elsewhere.

Below, at the bottom of the television station tower, Wu Yi ran into an old colleague from his previous department.

That woman greeted, “Wu Yi, you’re off work?”

“Yes,” Wu Yi said.

The woman asked, “You all held auditions today, right?”

Wu Yi said, “Was there an audition? I’m not sure.”

The woman rolled her eyes. “Who’re you trying to bluff? The entire Central TV staff knows auditions for The Voice were held today. It was even reported on the news. Hurry up and tell me a little about it. How many people were chosen? How did they do? You should know that I love watching singing talent shows the most, right? So how were the contestants you all chose compared to the contestants from the other satellite channels?

Wu Yi suddenly said, “Eh, you bought a new pair of shoes?”

“Yeah, they look good, right? Hey, I was asking you about the contestants. Why did you talk about my shoes instead?” The woman was almost at a loss for words because of that.

Wu Yi lied, “I’m not sure, I wasn’t at the venue.”

.....

Somewhere else.

Little Wang got on her bicycle and was preparing to ride it home.

Behind her, one of her university schoolmates came up to her. They had graduated together and come to Central TV to work at the same time, so they'd always had a pretty good relationship.

“Wang'er, I've been looking for you the whole day!”

“Ah? Looking for me?”

“I wanted to ask you about the auditions. I'm really curious.”

“Uhh.”

“Does your Executive Director Zhang really not choose the contestant based on their looks and only listen to their voices? What do the contestants who qualified for the next round look like? Did you take any photos? Show them to me.”

“Uhhh.”

“What are you hesitating for? I'm asking you, did you get any behind the scenes videos? Show them to me first! Recently, there've been so many people who pay attention to this new program of yours, even many of us in Central TV are guessing

what kinds of contestants you all selected. Just today alone, I've heard seven or eight people discussing it in the office."

"Uh, about this..."

"Weren't you at the venue? Tell me about it."

"No, I can't. Director Zhang...has told us to keep it confidential."

"F**k, what's there to be so secretive of."

"I really can't say."

"Just tell me a little, won't you? We're close friends, aren't we?"

"Ahem, I really cannot. Well, then, I'll go off first. See you tomorrow."

"Hey, you! Wait, wait! Why are you rushing off!?"

.....

The same situations were playing out for every staff member of The Voice. At the moment, there were a lot of discussions about The Voice. The internal staff at Central TV were also very concerned and curious about how the program was progressing. Some of them even wanted to go and observe the auditions, but

due to regulation, non-related staff were not allowed to enter the venue. As such, without an answer to their curiosity, they could only wait until it was time to knock off to find someone they knew from The Voice's program team, whether it be friends, ex-classmates, or ex-colleagues, so that they could get an update on the status of the program.

But without exception, none of them managed to find out anything!

Not one of the staff members from The Voice's program team leaked any news or information at all. It was as though they had all discussed beforehand to keep it a secret. Some of them even acted dumb by saying that they were not present at the auditions even though they were there. Did they really not know anything? Did Zhang Ye really ask them to keep it a secret? Actually, there was nothing like this at all! When did Zhang Ye ever ask them to keep the details of the audition under wraps?! As long as no video clips leaked, why would such small matters require them to keep it a secret!

However, no one said a thing! Not a single person!

Because the staff of The Voice's program team basically did not dare tell anyone! They were too embarrassed to do that!

Tell them? Nonsense! How should they tell them! Your sister! Look at the singing talent shows on all the other satellite channels, including those that aired in the past ten years. Counting all of them, which one did not have contestants who were either handsome guys or beautiful women? Which one of their

contestants were not in the peak of their youth!?

Pretty boys!

Pretty girls!

They were everywhere!

But for their chosen contestants from the preliminary auditions?

A bruiser!

A skinny and ugly man!

A woman weighing between 80 and 90 kilograms!

And there was even an old man!

But that was not the weirdest yet. The weirdest things about these people were their occupations. In the other talent shows, what did the handsome guys or beautiful women do for a living? They were either students from a music college or musicians who had graduated from performing arts schools. There were music teachers, piano teachers, guitar teachers, backup singers, independent musicians who composed their own songs, and even rookies who had just signed with a media agency! They had either already debuted or were working in music-related jobs as industry insiders! Their professional quality was for all to see!

However, when you looked at the chosen contestants for The Voice!?

A train driver!

A physical education teacher!

A bicycle repairman!

And there was even a sixty-year-old retiree!

How could they compare!!

How could they say anything!!

When comparing their program with other programs, the contrast was vastly different! Even if they were thick-skinned enough, they still would not have dared tell anyone about the backgrounds of their program's contestants. If they did, they would surely become laughingstocks!

Chapter 653 – Countdown To The Recording!

Two days later.

The second round of preliminary auditions began.

“Contestant No. 1, please come forward.”

“You may begin singing now.”

“Stop, that will do. Sorry, but you did not qualify for the next round.”

“Next contestant.”

The contestants came into the audition venue one by one. Most of them could not qualify for the next round. Only a few people passed Zhang Ye’s strict criteria, but the program team staff still didn’t think too highly of them. They knew that Zhang Ye’s appreciation of aesthetics and selection criteria were different, so they did not say anything. Basically, the more they thought that a contestant was not up to mark, the more Zhang Ye liked them; while the more they liked a contestant, the more Zhang Ye had his doubts. They were basically at odds with him on this matter.

At this time, the 28th contestant was being called in for her audition.

From outside, a young and glamorous woman walked through the door. She was dressed in western fashion and looked very confident. From the way she moved, it was obvious she carried herself quite well.

The eyes of the program team staff lighted up, but immediately turned to sighs.

Ha Qiqi scanned her over. "Please introduce yourself."

The young woman said in a crisp and clear voice, "Hello, teachers. My name is Yuan Tong and I'm 24 years old. My occupation is...I guess you can say that I'm a white collar worker."

"White collar?" Ha Qiqi repeated.

Yuan Tong said, "Yes, I work at my parent's company."

Oh.

An [affluent second generation](#)?

Ha Qiqi said, "Alright, you may begin now."

Yuan Tong smiled and said, "Then I will be performing 'Blooming.'"

Da, da. Yuan Tong was lightly snapping her fingers to create a rhythm. After a few beats, she started to sing softly and her beautiful voice resonated.

“Flowers bloom on the windowsill.

“But you aren’t here.

“Remembering that spring, when you were still beside me.

“These petals and your smiling face.”

With a sudden change from her soft singing, she launched into a soprano!

“The flowers have bloomed!

“But I’m crying!”

She could reach a very high pitch and still have her singing sound full without much vibrato in her voice. Her lung capacity was also very good as she held the notes for a long time without fading, so that was something worth mentioning.

The song ended.

Yuan Tong bowed and then said, “I’ve finished performing.”

Ha Qiqi also felt that she was really good. She was beautiful, had a good aura, and sang well, but regrettably, she had come to the wrong place because their executive director was unlike other people. If this were a different program, the producers would definitely be fighting for her to be on their show. Unfortunately, their executive director preferred those who didn’t look good, had vocal “deficiencies,” and worked low-level jobs. Hai, what a waste of a promising contestant.

As a result, Ha Qiqi said, “I’m sorry, you did not meet our requirements.”

Yuan Tong was a little surprised.

The other staff members of the program team already understood what made Zhang Ye tick. They knew that if it were someone they fancied to be good, Zhang Ye would definitely not bat an eyelid at them. Wu Yi also said, “Please go back.”

Helpless, Yuan Tong could only reply, “Thank you, teachers.”

But this time, Zhang Ye was dumbfounded. “Please go back for what?”

Ha Qiqi looked at him stunned. “Ah?”

Wu Yi and the others also stared blankly at him.

Zhang Ye was baffled, so he asked, “This contestant sang very well, so what’s there to question? Of course she has qualified, what do you all mean by not meeting the requirements? What kind of standard do you all have!” He even sounded a little angry at them. This bro had it so difficult trying to make this program work, yet you guys weren’t only not helping me, but instead making me even busier?

When Ha Qiqi and the others heard that, they nearly vomited blood!

Didn’t you dislike such contestants? Why did your attitude suddenly do a 180?

Ha Qiqi said, “Then what about Chang Si from before...”

Zhang Ye remarked, “Which Chang Si? Oh, I remember. That contestant didn’t hold a high pitch stabler than her and is also not as beautiful as her. We definitely need more focus on good-looking contestants who can also sing well. How did it end up with you all trying to eliminate her?” Then he turned to the young woman and said, “You’ve qualified for the next round.”

This was the contestant Zhang Ye was most satisfied with today, although her singing wasn’t exactly the best. But it was still considered quite outstanding already. At least compared to the train driver of the four “wonders,” her singing was a bit better. The key here was that she was also very beautiful and good-looking, so that too naturally qualified her as a key contestant!

Yuan Tong was so delighted it showed. “Thank you, Teacher Zhang. Can I also make a small request?”

“What is it?” Zhang Ye asked.

Yuan Tong said, “I would like your autograph. The two songs you wrote for Teacher Zhang Yuanqi have always been my favorite songs. I play them on repeat every day.”

“Hur hur, that’s great.” Zhang Ye did not say anything and just gave her his autograph.

Ha Qiqi and the others looked at each other. They finally understood that their auditions were never based on fundamentals or criteria, that there were no rules for whether a contestant performed below standard in this area or did well in another area. Whether they qualified or not, was all down to the executive director alone. If Zhang Ye said they met the requirements, then they met the requirements. If he said they weren’t up to standard, then they weren’t up to standard! Ai, in meeting such an executive director, this was as difficult as it could get.

Everyone on the program team thought that Zhang Ye chose the contestants based on his mood, but in fact, that was not true. They had arrived at such a conclusion simply because Zhang Ye had a different way of looking at things than them. Ha Qiqi and the others were not exactly professionals in the field of music and could only be considered observers. They were only looking for someone who, ideally, was good-looking. Or they liked a

performance because of their own subjective tastes, while those music professionals who had been asked to leave were all looking at singing skills or if the contestants were from a performing arts college. But they were too traditional in their judgment of a voice and could not accept voices that sounded new or odd to them.

It could be said that these two groups both had their limitations.

Compared to them, Zhang Ye looked for something much complexer. When judging a contestant, he was looking for their overall qualities, whether they could sing well or not, uniqueness of voice, whether their occupations were worth hyping, and even if the contestants could become subjects of conversation. These were all the factors Zhang Ye was considering. He rejected good looks? Who said so! If the contestant could sing well, had an extremely unique voice, and was especially beautiful, only an idiot would reject her! It's not like you could find such a contestant if you went out to specifically look for one, so why wouldn't she qualify?!

.....

Half a day passed.

The second round of preliminary auditions ended.

Zhang Ye inquired, "It looks like several of the candidates we picked as potential contestants did not turn up? Why didn't I see them?" There were a few candidates whom he was rather looking forward to meeting based on their demos.

Ha Qiqi answered, “They did not come. There’s one who needs to go to school and does not have free time, while another one needs to work overtime. Although I did mention that our program team would reimburse the cost of her return flight, the entire trip and audition would still take two days minimum. She probably feels that her work is more important and did not want to risk taking time off, since she might end up getting rejected by us as well as losing her job. Her boss at her workplace must be a really difficult person to deal with.”

They were finally seated in front of the computer again, sorting through all the demos that were emailed to them. The number of applications was getting increasingly higher by the day, but the quality of the candidates was not as uniform as the increase. There were hardly any good ones.

Zhang Ye thought for a long while before finally deciding to change the way the auditions were held. He would hold the auditions just like how the original The Voice of his previous world held them. “Sister Qi, how about this? Tomorrow, we will hold one more round of preliminary auditions here. Then after that you will choose some staff members and send them to various key cities in the country to carry out the additional preliminary auditions. If there isn’t enough manpower, we can hold the preliminary auditions one at a time in each city, otherwise we will hold them simultaneously across several cities.”

Ha Qiqi was taken aback by this suggestion. “Won’t that cost a lot of money? If we need to mobilize an entire team, the hotel accommodations, audition venues, equipment, and publicity will all cost money.”

Zhang Ye said, “I’ll allocate 5 million to you first. Will that be enough?”

Ha Qiqi suddenly became more spirited and she readily agreed, “Sure!”

See, money talks!

They had seemingly forgotten that their program had a production budget of over 100 million and was unlike the other talent shows on rival satellite channel stations that scrimped and saved on every penny. The Voice did not want for money at all!

Wu Yi said worriedly, “Director Zhang, if we expand the auditions to cover so many places, then without you leading the selection, how will we know which contestants qualify?”

Zhang Ye delegated his authority and replied, “As long as you all find them to be good, just send them my way. Those contestants I previously approved are all going to be the seeded contestants and the ones I like best. They are the red flowers of our show, but the only reason they can be that is because they will have some green leaves to make them stand out. So I want to reassure everyone a little here. Don’t worry too much about who is good or bad, as long as you all unanimously agree they are good, send them my way. We’ll sort them out after we know the number of contestants who passed.”

Those words reassured the team a lot. If they really had to apply Zhang Ye’s selection criteria in choosing the contestants, they

wouldn't know how to judge at all, since no one understood his selection criteria.

Zhang Ye asked, "Have you already found the music arrangement teachers?"

Ha Qiqi nodded. "Director Jiang has arranged for two music arrangement teachers and a band to be transferred to our program team, but there won't be a music director or music consultants due to that day's inci..."

Zhang Ye understood. "There's no need for a music director. It will only be more troublesome with them around. We only need the music arrangers. Regarding the already qualified contestants, inform the music arrangement teachers to start helping them with their song arrangements today. Otherwise, once the number of qualified contestants increase, they will become too busy. For those seeded contestants I mentioned, I want to spare no effort when it comes to their arrangements. They must be done to perfection. As for the non-seeded contestants, of course we will still do our best for them, but make the appropriate adjustments."

Ha Qiqi said, "I understand."

Zhang Zuo came over from the other side. "Director Zhang, all the new equipment has been delivered."

Zhang Ye immediately brought everyone to the recording studio and had a look around. Then he said to Zhang Zuo, "Has the design for the custom chairs been confirmed yet?"

Zhang Zuo replied, “We’ve already placed an order. I’ve also hounded the workshop for progress. They are currently rushing the job, but because this design has a certain degree of difficulty to make, they told us it would take half a month at the quickest.”

“How about the stage?” Zhang Ye looked to the stage which was piled with construction materials.

Zhang Zuo answered, “We are setting it up according to your request. We started working on it yesterday. As for the contestants’ waiting area and the second studio, the workers have also started work on it.”

Zhang Ye urged, “Hurry up. Try to get it done as soon as possible.”

Zhang Zuo said, “I understand, I’ll get them to hurry.”

“How about the website?” Zhang Ye asked.

The staff member who was in charge of the website details immediately answered, “Director Zhang, the website has been completed after we worked on it overnight, The latest news, promotional news, and other related information can be added onto the website at anytime.”

“Well done.” Zhang Ye said, “Have we contacted the Publicity Department yet?”

A female editor responded, “I’ve already contacted them. Central TV Department 1 will allocate a total of 75 seconds of promotional airtime to us. How we use this 75 seconds is up to us, but other than the weekend primetime slots, we are free to choose whichever time we want to air it.”

Zhang Ye nodded. “Then we will make them 15 seconds each. Each of the four coaches will record a video clip. We’ll also do a group promo with them.”

Every aspect of the program’s production was progressing very quickly and already put into motion.

As of now, the countdown to the recording had already began!

Chapter 654 – Arrival Of The Voice's Theme Song!

On this morning.

The freshly published morning newspapers went on sale.

“The Voice's Nanjing auditions overwhelmed by applications!”

“A 100 million title sponsorship: Is it worth the money?”

“Results of a public survey: Less than 50% of the public thinks that The Voice will do well, with more than half of industry insiders and the public still doubtful!”

“Zhang Ye appears at Shanghai's audition venue yesterday for a promotional campaign of The Voice!”

“Can The Voice possibly overcome the industry downturn of talent shows?”

“The singing show industry faces a crisis, plagued by signs of fatigue! Overcrowded market for singing talent shows attracts strict control from overseeing authorities!”

“The Voice to become final straw in an overcrowded singing talent show market?”

The entertainment headlines of various newspapers and online news were all giving continued coverage and tracking of news concerning The Voice of China. Even though many people did not think that The Voice would achieve much in the viewership ratings, since it was a mega-scale production costing a large sum of money to produce, along with the addition of the Heavenly Queen to the coaches list, the 100 million RMB title sponsorship fee, and being Zhang Ye's reputed production, this topic was naturally more widely discussed. The media was certainly more than willing to report about it. There was no lack of news in the entertainment industry but a sustainable, news-generating program like The Voice was missing. With the appearance of The Voice, it could be said that it helped thousands of journalists keep their jobs—no longer would their mothers have to worry about them lacking news to write about!

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Past 7 AM.

Shortly after Zhang Ye sent Chenchen past the school gates, he received a call.

It was Zhang Yuanqi. "Where's my song?"

"What song?" Zhang Ye replied instinctively.

Old Zhang said: "You're asking me what song? The song you owe me. Didn't you say that you would write a theme song for The

Voice? Well, give the copyright to me and we'll be even."

Only then did Zhang Ye remember that he made such a promise some days ago. Since he still owed Old Zhang a song, and The Voice was in need of a theme song too, he decided to simply just write a song for Old Zhang that could also be used as the theme song. But he had been too busy recently, flying to Shanghai for the preliminary auditions and a promotional campaign, then flying back on the same afternoon, and rushing to pick up the child from school. With so many things to handle, he had already long since forgotten about this matter. He immediately said: "Oh, oh, oh, about that, how would I forget. I've been writing the song for the past few days and even stayed up for a few nights over it." He bluffed his way through.

Old Zhang said: "Is that so?"

Zhang Ye replied: "Of course, I definitely keep your matters in mind."

Old Zhang said: "Then have you finished writing the song?"

Zhang Ye said: "Yes, I've finished writing it."

Old Zhang said: "OK."

Zhang Ye said: "When you're here at Central TV, I'll pass you the score and then the four of you coaches will have some rehearsals to sing it. After the recording is done, we'll then use it for the intro

theme song of the program.”

After hanging up, he drove toward Central TV.

When he reached the recording studio, he started another busy day of work. With one hand, he was remotely controlling several auditions being held at other provinces while with the other hand, he was giving instruction for the stage layout and planning the progress for the presentation of the promotional clips. The recording of the promotional clips for the four coaches were done in succession. The edited clips of Zhang Xia, Chen Guang, and Fan Wenli were thus the earliest to be put out and broadcast to the public on Central TV Department 1, with each clip lasting 15 seconds. Due to Zhang Yuanqi's busy schedule, her recording had only been completed yesterday. As Old Zhang had the biggest reputation among the coaches, her clip certainly had to be broadcast with the best timing. All of these matters had to be arranged and planned by the executive director, Zhang Ye, just like everything else here that also needed his attention.

As for the executive producer, Fu Sihong?

Except for the beginning when Fu Sihong objected several times to Zhang Ye's proposed plan for The Voice, there were no signs of Fu Sihong appearing around here after that. Central TV Department 1 had sent Fu Sihong to supervise the team. As long as production was on track with no issues, Fu Sihong would not need to meddle in anything. It did not matter to Zhang Ye whether Fu Sihong was here or not, but without him here, Zhang Ye could afford to do his own job even better without any apprehension.

“Liu’er.”

“Director Zhang, you’re looking for me?”

“Is the voting system ready?”

“We haven’t ordered it yet. It’s not needed yet, right?”

“Even though it will be only used in the finals, don’t delay! Get it done quickly!”

“Understood, I will contact them and order immediately!”

“We can borrow it from the other Central TV program teams if they have prepared systems. Little Zhou, Little Zhou, come over here for a while.”

“Ai, Director Zhang, I’m here, I’m here!”

“The 75 seconds of promotional airtime that Central TV allocated to us will certainly not be enough. Get in touch with other media, such as those large video hosting websites, and buy some commercial airtime from them.”

“Sure, I’ll get it done!”

“Don’t be afraid to spend money. Buy more.”

“Ah? Aren’t we running low on money?”

“Even if it’s low, we still have more than 10 million RMB. For other talent shows, 10 million RMB might already be their entire budget for production, but this amount is just the leftovers of our budget, so there’s no commercial we can’t buy. Advertising is the most important activity of all. We must make sure to successfully get across the concept of voice to let the people understand and accept it. To achieve all these, it’s never too much no matter how much we spend.”

“I understand, Director Zhang. Please wait for my good news!”

Zhang Ye had to keep everything under control so he had to handle every detail diligently.

As he had already been appointed executive director for about ten days, he was becoming more and more like one now. Brimming with the air of an executive director, he spoke increasingly firmly, assigning tasks with greater clarity. Zhang Ye was also growing together with the production progress. This role as executive director was very important to him as it was a very valuable experience for his future success and irreplaceable with any amount of money or popularity.

One of the reasons why Zhang Ye accepted Jiang Yuan’s offer to join Central TV Department 1 was because he was promised that he could be the executive director of such a big production at an important channel like Central TV Department 1. He needed this

sort of life and work experience. This growth would give him a foundation for future endeavors. Compared to when Zhang Ye was the executive producer and director of Zhang Ye's Talk Show, it wasn't the same level. The talk show only had Zhang Ye himself onstage since it centered around him as the host and the main focus of his performances. His role as the executive director was just in name and would not compare to directing a large-scale talent show on Central TV.

Time passed quickly. It was already noon.

Zhang Ye had a quick and simple lunch before returning to continue instructing the production.

Suddenly, Assistant Director Zhang Zuo walked hurriedly into the recording studio to where the stage of The Voice was. "Director Zhang? Eh? Where's Director Zhang?"

Little Wang pointed somewhere not far away. "He's installing the chairs with the workers."

Zhang Zuo exclaimed and ran over in a hurry. "Aiyo, Director Zhang. Why do you have to handle this yourself, just leave it to the workers."

Only then did Zhang Ye reluctantly put down the chair and tell the workers with a worried voice, "Don't place the four chairs too far from each other. Put them slightly nearer so the coaches can hear each other without the microphone...a bit closer...yes, OK, that's good now." This guy was a perfectionist. The word

“adequate” didn’t exist in his dictionary, so it developed into a bad habit of his. Zhang Ye was never comfortable if he only left it to others to do the work.

Zhang Zuo said, “Director Zhang, they’ve arrived over there.”

Zhang Ye turned around. He panted, “Who have arrived?” He dusted off his hands.

Zhang Zuo blinked and replied, “Sister Zhang and the rest of the coaches have arrived. Should I bring them over or will you be going to the television station tower?”

Zhang Ye was taken aback. “The coaches? What are they here for?”

Zhang Zuo helplessly expressed, “You were the one who arranged it. Didn’t you say a few days ago that you were writing a song and wanted the four coaches to come in this afternoon and do a simple rehearsal of the intro theme song? Have you forgotten about it?”

Ah?

Was it today!?

Holy shit, I was too caught up in work! No wonder Old Zhang called me so early in the morning to ask me about the song!

Zhang Ye nearly fainted before he recovered, “They’re already here?”

Zhang Zuo said, “Yes, they’ve already arrived.”

“Let’s do it this way, don’t let them come over here first. Try to stall them and make them wait awhile,” Zhang Ye immediately stated.

Zhang Zuo became confused. “Why? What should I say to them?”

Zhang Ye answered, “Just tell them that I’m not around and then bring them over after half an hour!” Having said that, Zhang Ye quickly walked away. “Where’s the music arrangement teacher? Where’s the music arrangement teacher?”

Little Wang said, “He’s helping the contestants with the arrangements.”

Zhang Ye hastily ordered, “Tell him to put that on hold for now and to come look for me.”

“Ah? OK.” Seeing Zhang Ye so anxious, Little Wang double-timed and went to get the music arranger.

.....

In a recording studio.

Zhang Ye went inside with a youthful music arrangement teacher.

“Director Zhang, why are you in such a hurry to find me?” The music arrangement teacher wondered, “Are we going to do the music arrangement for the theme song? I’ll arrange the music first and then let the four teachers sing it?”

Zhang Ye did not say a word.

The music arrangement teacher said, “Then can you give me the score? Let me have a look at the song first?”

Zhang Ye remained silent.

At this moment, the music arrangement teacher finally realized something and was shocked. “You...could it be that you have not written it yet? Weren’t we supposed to have the rehearsal today?”

Zhang Ye coughed, “We can still make it if I write it now.”

The music arrangement teacher nearly fainted at this response. Holy shit, you really didn’t write it?

“What kind of song do you think will be most suitable as a theme song?” Zhang Ye made a hasty last-minute effort to do something about it.

The music arrangement teacher didn't know what to say. "But haven't the four coaches already arrived? It's too late to write the song now. Actually, there are all kinds of theme songs for these types of talent shows. But I personally think it's best to be in line with the theme of the competition, like how to express one's dream—something inspirational, so that it can easily blend into the talent show's atmosphere and highlight the contestants and stage. Besides, such songs have to reflect positive energy and have a sunshiny feel, so it shouldn't have any lyrics that talk about a reflection on life or words like that. That would complicate things and make it less outstanding. I guess that would be suitable as a theme song."

Dreams?

The stage?

Positive energy?

Contestants? Talent show?

After hearing that, Zhang Ye nodded. "Do you have a pen and paper?"

The music arrangement teacher was stunned, then looked around for a bit before handing one to him.

Zhang Ye immediately picked up the fountain pen and started to

write the lyrics on the paper. As he wrote it, he spoke, “I’ll sing it once for you now, so help me write the score and arrange the music as well.”

The music arrangement teacher said dumbfounded, “Y-you have already thought of a song?”

F**k!

It’s only been a few seconds!

I had just finished describing what kind of song was suitable for the show. At most around ten seconds after that you have already finished writing it? That’s impossible! The fastest lyrics writer in the industry would not have a speed like yours, even if you multiplied their speed by a hundred times. No one could be this fast!

He did not believe it, but he grabbed an empty score and got ready to record it.

The next second, Zhang Ye started to sing with his terrible singing,

“I wanna fly to the sky, walk beside the Sun.

“The world waits for me to change it.

“Never been afraid of others seeing my dreams.

“Here, I can make it happen.

“Laughing loudly, let’s walk side by side.

“Isn’t happiness everywhere.

“Casting off all worry, I stride forward bravely.

“Now I am taking center stage!!”

The music arrangement teacher was dumbfounded. You really could write it out in a little more than ten seconds? What the f**k! Are you on stimulants!?

Chapter 655 – The Speed Of Zhang Ye’s Songwriting!

Zhang Ye sang.

And the music arrangement teacher wrote out the simplified notation on the fly.

Once...

Again...

A long time passed. After singing and going through the song several times, the notation was finished and the lyrics were added in, completing the song.

“Perfect.” Zhang Ye hands trembled as he held the score.

The music arrangement teacher was also fatigued and profusely sweat. He wiped the sweat off his forehead and asked, “Teacher Zhang, can we do this ahead of time in the future? Rushing like this is really scary. Our program team has spent a lot of money to invite the four coaches to join us with figures that even the public might not know about. If they find out, it will surely cause an uproar. The four coaches are big shot celebrities in the music industry and we were the ones who arranged for them to come over today. If we were unable to produce a song for them to rehearse with, it would have become very embarrassing for us and make it look like we thought they were fools.”

They were not ordinary celebrities. If they turned hostile and threatened to not record the program or rehearse the song, their program team would be in big trouble.

Zhang Ye pretended it was nothing, then just smiled and said, “But we managed to finish it, didn’t we?”

The music arrangement teacher had no words in response. Indeed, this song only took twenty minutes to finish, but excluding the time taken to compose the simplified notation, Zhang Ye had only taken less than a minute to write it. It felt like he finished as he was writing and singing. The music arrangement teacher could swear that—in all these years he had worked in this industry, he had known countless lyricists and singer-songwriters—when it came down to songwriting speed, Zhang Ye was absolutely ranked number one among all the people he had ever met. At this moment, he looked at Zhang Ye full of admiration! He only started writing the song when the coaches were already at the doorstep, yet he still managed to finish writing the song! In the entire industry, only Zhang Ye would risk doing it this way. Other than him, no other person could achieve it! No one would believe this even if it were revealed, but whoever did would surely have to bow down to him!

As for the quality of the song, the music arrangement teacher had not really listened to it carefully yet. First, he was in too much of a rush trying to fill in the simplified notations and his mind was not focused on the melody and lyrics. Second, Zhang Ye’s singing ability was just average, nothing special. Third, it would be difficult to judge just from hearing him sing without music and instrumental accompaniment.

Outside, someone was knocking on the door. Dong dong dong.

Before Zhang Ye could say anything, the person had already pushed open the door and come inside.

It was Deputy Director Zhang Zuo who said anxiously, “Director Zhang, I can’t hold them back anymore. The four teachers can’t wait any longer and are already making their way here to look for you.”

Zhang Ye nodded. “It’s been hard on you, Brother Zhang.”

Zhang Zuo had really put in a lot of effort to make up lies and find excuses to delay them, but the four coaches were all big shots and extremely famous, and even the least popular among them was a national bel canto singer. Every one of them possessed a great aura, so it was considerably stressful for him to deal with them tactfully.

At this moment, some voices came from outside the corridor.

“Little Zhang?” It was the voice of Grandma Zhang Xia.

And then he seemingly heard Zhang Yuanqi asking someone, “Miss, where is your executive director?”

That female staff exclaimed and then muttered, “I don’t know

either.”

Zhang Xia said, “I know he must be here, ask him to come out. He scheduled us to be here for the recording and we’re already here, yet he’s avoiding us. It’s almost been half an hour, so why has he still not shown himself?”

Zhang Ye hurriedly walked out the door while holding the score. He looked to the end of the corridor and walked up to them, laughing. “Grandma Zhang, Sister Zhang, Brother Chen, Sister Fan, you’re all here already?”

Chen Guang said in a speechless manner, “We arrived long ago.”

Zhang Yuanqi looked toward where he came out, then smiled and said, “So you were hiding in there?”

Zhang Ye said, “No, I wasn’t hiding. It was just that something had cropped up suddenly over here, so I couldn’t get away.” Turning to Zhang Zuo, he pretended to be angry and scolded, “Brother Zhang, why didn’t you inform me that the teachers had already arrived. If I knew they were here, I would have dropped everything and gone to receive them. What can be more important than the teachers?”

Zhang Zuo could only think to himself how he was told by Zhang Ye to delay them, but he just said, “...I’ll pay attention to this next time.”

Zhang Ye reminded him, “Next time if the teachers come and look for me, make sure to inform me immediately. Look, I very nearly got misunderstood by the teachers this time.”

Zhang Yuanqi looked at him. “But I don’t think it’s a misunderstanding.”

Zhang Ye coughed.

Zhang Xia criticized, “You were too much. How could you let us sit around and wait for more than twenty minutes? At least you should have given us the score to take a look at first.”

Zhang Ye also felt a little embarrassed, since he was the one who arranged the meeting yet he totally forgot about it. It was unacceptable. “Grandma Zhang, you’re right. This time, it’s my fault, so you can just blame me.”

Fan Wenli blinked. Becoming sharper, she asked, “Is there some problem with the theme song?”

Zhang Ye immediately let out an uncontrolled laugh and started lying without any guilt, “How could there be any problems? Actually, I’ve already finished writing it, and it took me a whole week to perfect it. The lyrics and melody were carefully deliberated and meticulously scrutinized upon. I’ve already made it into absolutely, the most exquisite song among songs. Here, see? The score is right here. I’ve been waiting for all of you to arrive since long ago.”

Spent a whole week?

Meticulous? Scrutiny? Carefully deliberated?

The music arrangement teacher stared in silence at the ceiling.

Zhang Xia and the rest of them walked up to him. “Is that so?”

“Let me take a look.” Zhang Yuanqi took the score from him.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli also stood beside her and looked at the score. They started humming along to the lyrics, “I wanna fly...to the sky...walk beside...the Sun...” As they were unfamiliar with this song and had never heard it before, their humming was also intermittent. They were only reading the simplified notations as they hummed along but it didn’t sound too coherent.

At this moment, the music arrangement teacher was also seriously savoring the song for the first time, since he did not listen to it earnestly before.

Fan Wenli was a music teacher in the past and had previously taught students to sight-read music scores, so she was skilled in this area and adapted much faster than the others. She was the first person to sing the song in its completed form.

“Never been afraid of others seeing my dreams.

“Here, I can make it happen.

“Laughing loudly, let’s walk side by side.

“Isn’t happiness everywhere.

“Casting off all worry, I stride forward bravely.

“Now I am taking center stage!”

On seeing Fan Wenli singing so fluently, the other three coaches stopped their singing and listened quietly to Fan Wenli singing the entire song.

The more they listened, the more their expressions changed!

Zhang Zuo was the first person to be shocked. He did not know music, nor melody changes, nor treble and bass. He only knew this song was very nice to listen to and was the type of work that could make people excited after listening to it just once. Moreover, the lyrics were also very encouraging. The dreams people have, they can make it happen here? Wasn’t that exactly the message they wanted The Voice to portray!? Didn’t they want to provide the platform for people to realize their dreams! This song matched perfectly!

The next person to be shocked was the music arrangement teacher. Originally, he thought Zhang Ye was only messing around as he had no choice but to randomly write a song because the four

teachers had already arrived at their doorstep. He felt that the quality of the song couldn't possibly be any good, because how good could a song that only took one minute to write be? To even be able to write it out was already a miracle! But when the music arrangement teacher finished listening, he knew that he was wrong right from the start! This song was too awesome! How could this be a haphazardly done piece of work!?

Honestly speaking, if the music arrangement teacher had not witnessed Zhang Ye composing on the spot, he would not have believed what was unfolding in front of him no matter what! It was written so quickly, had a high quality, a good tune, and was even in line with the concept and vision of the program. The music arrangement teacher knew that what had happened today was truly an eye-opener for him!

Fan Wenli finished singing the song.

Chen Guang had long since forgotten about the displeasure at waiting for half an hour for Zhang Ye. He even gave a thumbs up to Zhang Ye after listening to the song.

Zhang Xia nodded furiously in appreciation. "Great song!"

Fan Wenli was also very satisfied with it and commented, "This song is really tailor-made for the program. Teacher Zhang really took great effort in crafting the lyrics and melody."

Zhang Ye laughed gently while waving it off. "That's not true, though I did use eight or nine days to write it."

Chen Guang lamented, “You’re already so busy with stage and preliminary auditions, yet you took the time to finish writing such a good song in just eight or nine days. Teacher Zhang Ye’s talent is indeed extraordinary.”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “No matter how busy and tired I am, it’s all part of my job. I’m the executive director after all.”

But suddenly, Zhang Yuanqi, pinching the score, slightly rubbed the last parts and asked, “Why is the ink on this score not dry yet?”

Upon hearing that, Zhang Ye broke out in cold sweat.

Fan Wenli came up and took a look. “Oh, it’s really not dry yet.”

Zhang Xia also reached out to touch it and then looked at Zhang Ye. “Little Zhang, you got your people to hold us back and delayed us for more than 20 minutes. Could it be that you forgot to write the song and ended up writing it only just then?”

Chen Guang stared with eyes wide. “Ah? This song was just written?”

Zhang Zuo also jumped up in fright as he knew that Zhang Ye had asked him to hold back the four teachers for a reason, but he did not expect this to be the problem!

The music arrangement teacher also did not know where to look, so pretended to have not heard anything.

Zhang Ye immediately answered, “How is that possible? How could I have forgotten such an important matter? I had already finished writing the song long ago, but after discussing with the music arrangement teacher earlier, we found there were some problems with the notes on the score, so we got it changed. Then... then we copied it again. That’s why the ink was still wet.

Chen Guang found fault with his words. “Didn’t you say you had already written out the score earlier and was busy with other things just now?”

“Ah? Did I say that?” Zhang Ye said.

Fan Wenli also exclaimed, “You can’t really have just written it last minute, could you? In only twenty minutes? How can that be? I got my team to write a song with a specific set of requirements, yet the quickest they could do it in was still more than half a day! The quality isn’t even guaranteed to be good.”

Zhang Ye made up another story. “That’s why I didn’t forget...”

Zhang Xia exposed Zhang Ye’s secret to the husband and wife, “Little Zhang is best known for his fast songwriting speed. At the last Spring Festival Gala, the song ‘Woman Flower’ was written in the blink of an eye. At most, it only took a minute or two.”

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and chimed in, “It’s the same for ‘Wishing We Last Forever.’ Although the lyrics were written by him earlier, the music was composed by him on the spot. It didn’t even take a few minutes.”

Chen Guang: “...”

Fan Wenli: “...”

It was only then that they found out that Zhang Ye had such stories surrounding him!

Could it really be that Zhang Ye had waited until they were right at the doorstep of Central TV for the song rehearsal before he took his time to compose a song for them? If that was so, then speaking from a certain angle, he was truly a god!

Chapter 656 – The “Little Leader” Of The Program Team!

Afternoon.

In the music recording studio, the four coaches started familiarizing themselves with the song.

Zhang Ye got the music arrangement teacher to stay behind and found another two staff members to come over to help with setting up the equipment. Then he finally said, “You all can start rehearsing. I need to leave first as there’re a lot of things to handle at the stage.”

Zhang Xia put down the score. “Wait a moment, Little Zhang.”

“Ai, Grandma Zhang, what is it?” Zhang Ye asked.

“Just now, when we arrived, we heard that there are contestants who’ve already qualified from the preliminary auditions and are secretly rehearsing and having their songs arranged over at the other studio?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yes, they started rehearsing a few days ago. The main issue is with the screen time. It’s impossible for every song to take up four or five minutes, so we had to make appropriate adjustments. Besides, every one of them is a talented singer, so they have higher standards for themselves. Likewise, our program has high expectations of them. That’s why the songs have to be

rearranged to suit them. The workload for that is very heavy. We've been working on it several days now so that everyone can get a once over of the process."

Zhang Xia requested, "After we've finished rehearsing this song, we want to take a look at the contestants."

Zhang Yuanqi did not have this request, as she was standing apart from the others, taking a call which was probably work related.

Zhang Ye blinked a few times. "All of you are so busy. Why would you all want to see them? They are still in the transitional phase, so you all won't be able to see much anyway."

Fan Wenli smiled and replied, "What Grandma Zhang meant was that we would like to have a look at the conditions and quality of the contestants. The rumors in the media and outside world are rife with the preliminary audition process, with so many of them irrelevant and baseless. So we'd like to see for ourselves to understand the situation regarding the contestants in order to mentally prepare for the recording with them."

Chen Guang agreed, "Yes, I'm really looking forward to seeing them for myself as well."

Zhang Ye shook his head and rejected, "No, that's not allowed."

Chen Guang asked, "Even we aren't allowed to have a look?"

Zhang Ye said, “That studio where they are rehearsing is a secure environment. Other than our own program team’s staff, no one else is permitted to enter.”

“We’ll just stand far away and watch for a while.” Zhang Xia said, “Do you think that we would leak information?”

Zhang Ye waved his hands. “I really cannot allow that, Grandma Zhang. If you saw them now, there would be no more suspense. When the program’s being recorded, there won’t be the impact of seeing the contestants for the first time either.”

They tried to argue about this matter for a little longer.

But Zhang Ye did not agree to their request. There wasn’t even room for negotiation.

Actually, at this moment, no one knew what the final presentation of The Voice was going to be like and the sort of stage setup the program was going to have. The kind of lighting? The kind of contestants? The hosting style? Nearly everyone didn’t have a clue, including the program team’s staff. The only person who knew was Zhang Ye. As the executive director and overall producer of The Voice, he knew what sort of news to release to hype up publicity and the sort of news that needed to be kept confidential. There must be some suspense. Everything could only be revealed on the day of the program’s recording and not a day earlier. They were just like important cards held in Zhang Ye’s hand. If he used them up too early, it would become meaningless.

Outside.

After he came out of the music recording studio, he quickly headed toward the stage of the main recording studio. As the four teachers were already veterans in the music industry, he was only responsible for providing the song and could not help in any other way.

The moment he left, text message appeared on his cell phone.

Di di.

Old Zhang: “Where did you go?”

She was probably done with her call.

Zhang Ye replied after reading: “I left. Have to help out in the main recording studio.”

Old Zhang: “This song doesn’t count. Write me another.”

Zhang Ye was confused. “Why doesn’t it count?”

Old Zhang: “It doesn’t suit me.”

Zhang Ye typed: “Heh, this song isn’t divided between gender or age. If you don’t like it, I’ll give it to someone else. I noticed Chen Guang’s eyes were gleaming when he listened to the song, but since he heard I had written it for you in advance, he didn’t try to snatch the song away.”

Old Zhang: “I’ll keep this song but you have to write another for me.”

Zhang Ye replied: “Impossible. I endured so much pain just giving this song to you. Are you treating my songs like they are cabbages you can get from the market for next to nothing? This is art and needs to be treated with great care. Anyway, I don’t have any songs available now. We can talk in the future if there’s a suitable song for you. Let’s stop talking. I still have a lot to do here.”

There were no more replies from her after that.

Zhang Ye exited from the messages interface and saw two missed calls. One was from an hour ago while the other call was half an hour earlier. As he just caught up with work, he hadn’t heard them. Both calls were from Chenchen’s physical education teacher, Luo Yu. He thought for a moment and decided to call her back.

Du du. The call connected.

Luo Yu said: “Teacher Zhang, you’ve finally called back.”

Zhang Ye said: “What’s the matter, Teacher Luo? You were looking for me?”

Luo Yu said: “There are no classes in the afternoon today at Experimental Primary School. All the parents have already picked their children up, but I saw that Chenchen was still at school, so I guessed that you probably forgot about her. When I tried calling you, you didn’t pick up either. In the end, I decided to act on my own and brought Chenchen to Central TV along with me. I am rehearsing with the music arrangement teacher in the studio now, but I’ve handed Chenchen over to AD Ha Qiqi. They’re over at the stage area.”

Zhang Ye exclaimed loudly: “Aiyo, how absent-minded could I get. I forgot it was Friday today. Thank you very much, Teacher Luo. Sorry to have troubled you.”

“It’s nothing, I was coming to Central TV anyway,” Luo Yu said.

“Then I’ll go look for the kid.” Zhang Ye hurried up and headed to the main recording studio.

At the recording studio.

Dust filled the air.

This place was not much different from a construction site right now because Zhang Ye had requested that the stage and the audience seating undergo a major overhaul. Everyone was very busy with their tasks.

Without any effort, Zhang Ye found Chenchen immediately. He saw the little kid standing in the middle of the crowded stage, waving her small arms around like Zhang Ye and taking charge of the current work.

“Little Wang, why are you on your cell phone again?” Chenchen said in her childish voice.

Little Wang almost cried at this. “Young ancestor, I was just looking at the news.”

Chenchen pointed to a place nearby. “They’re moving those boxes over there. Go over and help them now.”

Little Wang said helplessly, “Alright.”

Chenchen swept her gaze around and found another person. She rudely addressed, “Wu Yi, go and take charge of the workers. They’re not doing anything at all.”

Wu Yi glanced to the corner, and sure enough, there were a few workers lounging around and smoking. He immediately went over. “Stub out your cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed here!”

But Chenchen still wasn't done. She called to a youth, "Little Li."

The youth rolled his eyes.

Chenchen said, "Have you finished compiling the statistics Zhang Ye told you to do last week?"

That youth looked like he was both crying and laughing. He replied, "I submitted it to Director Zhang on Monday."

Chenchen nodded her head like a little adult. "OK, you've done well."

A female editor in her thirties jokingly asked her, "Little Leader, I have completed all my tasks at hand. What should I do next?"

Chen Chen said, "Nothing, you may have a ten minute rest."

The female editor said, "That's great, thank you Little Leader, hehe."

During these past few days, Zhang Ye had been bringing Chenchen along to Central TV with him to work and she began to become well-acquainted with everyone on the program team. This little kid was really getting a kick out of being a leader, and from time to time, she would take charge and give some instruction. In the program team, Zhang Ye was known as the leader, while Chenchen was affectionately known as the "Little Leader."

Zhang Ye walked up to her with a straight face.

“Leader.”

“Director Zhang.”

“Teacher Zhang.”

The people who were nearby greeted him when they saw him.

Noticing the situation, Chenchen also stopped ordering people around and slowly walked toward the audience seating. But before she could get away, Zhang Ye dragged her back.

“You little imp!” Zhang Ye glared and said, “Why are you making trouble around here again?”

Chenchen argued with reason, “I was helping you supervise them.”

Zhang Ye said, “Who are you supervising? I’ve already warned you not to do so, yet here you are, getting a kick out of ordering people around, aren’t you? Go! Go into my office and do your homework there! I’ll take care of you later!”

Chenchen smirked and walked away quite carefree.

Zhang Ye barked at her as she walked off, “I’ll check on your homework in the afternoon, so you better do it well!”

A female director standing off to the side laughed, “That kid is so cute.”

“Oh, you think so?” Zhang Ye was tickled. “Even she can be considered cute? She drives people nuts. You might not know, but I feel my head will explode at any time. That kid’s way of thinking and train of thought is completely different from normal kids. You never know what she’s thinking.”

Chapter 657 – The Unsellable Advertisements

Countdown to broadcast: 20 days to the broadcast of The Voice of China.

In the early morning, upon reaching his office, Zhang Ye did some calculations regarding the production timeline and felt that they were ahead of time, since all aspects of their preparation were already underway. In the coming days, they could officially start the program's recording. Except for an equipment order that had been delayed for a week or so, generally not much time was wasted and everything went according to plan. The construction of the stage was almost complete, the auditions held in other provinces were also wrapping up, while the contestants were busy rehearsing their performances and the coaches rehearsed their songs. The staff were also learning how to operate the new equipment. Everything was going smoothly. The only part with slow progress would probably be the case with the advertisers.

Dong dong.

There was a knock on his door.

“Come in.” Zhang Ye looked up.

Little Wang pushed the door open and entered. “Director Zhang, they're here.”

Zhang Ye acknowledged her and then stood up to welcome them.

Four people stepped in from outside. There were men and women in the group, ranging from their thirties to forties and dressed in suits and business attire. They were all advertisers' representatives or executives, and had come to discuss the advertising rights fee. Because a consensus could not be reached previously, Zhang Ye made an appointment with them to discuss it again.

“Teacher Zhang, we meet again.”

“Secretary Li, please come in.”

“Hello, Teacher Zhang.”

“Director Xu, have a seat.”

Zhang Ye invited the four of them to take seats and had Little Wang pour them some water. Then, he said to them, “We’re already counting down to the airing of the program. It’s only 20 days away. Since the recording will certainly be done several days in advance, we don’t have much time anymore. I urge every one of you to please reconsider.”

A woman from Plum Soy Milk Company said, “Your asking price is too high.”

Zhang Ye shook his head. “To be honest, it’s not an excessive

asking price at all. An advertising rights fee of 3 million RMB is totally incomparable to the 100 million title sponsorship from the Brain Gold company. If we went by the usual ratio of the advertising rights fee to the title sponsorship fees, even if we asked for a 5 million RMB advertising rights fee, it would not be too much. But based on the market situation, we deliberately took a step back and lowered it by almost half of the original asking price. Moreover, our program allocates very good placement for our advertisers and will even repeatedly mention them immediately after we advertise for the title sponsors. For example, we promote our advertising partners in the host's speech, after every advertisement break and also at the ending credits of the program, all of these are extremely good placements.”

The middle-aged man from Red & Blue Pharmaceuticals said, “Actually, a 100 million RMB title sponsorship fee is not reasonable at all as it is way beyond the industry standards, and is likely going to be a bubble. Let me say this, Teacher Zhang. For other similar singing talent shows in the industry, the title sponsorship for a program is only around 10 to 20 million, while the highest advertising rights fee is only around 1 million. Some programs would even settle for 700,000 to 800,000, yet here you are, asking for an excess of 3 million and that the price is non-negotiable. We will not accept such a price. My best offer stands at 1.5 million.”

Zhang Ye looked at him and said, “If you want to compare us with the other programs, fine. We were able to invite Grandma Zhang Xia to join us, can the other programs do the same? We have the Chen Guang couple joining us as well, are the other programs able to do that? We even have the Heavenly Queen Zhang Yuanqi on board, what about the other programs? I’m not saying all this just for showing off. What I’m trying to say is we have spent a lot of money to invite four big shot coaches to join us, so we also have

pressure on our expenditure. The four coaches are able to bring in a great deal of publicity and viewership ratings, so the advertising effects will be much greater. That is why our asking price for the advertising fee is also higher compared to the other programs.”

Another executive, this time from Heehee Dairy Industry, said, “It’s exactly because of this reason that we were willing to increase our offer. Teacher Zhang, let me tell you this, no matter how much the other companies offer, the highest Heehee Dairy Industry is willing to offer stands at 1.8 million RMB. I have already drawn up the contract, so if you feel it’s fine, we can sign the contract immediately.”

Zhang Ye waved it off. “No way.”

The women from Plum Soy Milk Company said, “Teacher Zhang, I heard that your program only managed to secure one advertiser to commit to the advertising rights. If you still insist on 3 million RMB and not lower it, it will be very difficult to sell the rights. In the end, it will just be a waste of resources and you will incur the losses.”

The executive for Heehee Dairy Industry followed up, “If you insist on 3 million RMB, we certainly won’t buy it. There isn’t any other company that has the resources or desire to buy the first-tier advertising rights from you anyway. At most, they can only afford the second or third tier of ads. Thus, if some of the slots for the first tier ads are left empty, won’t that be a waste? If it can be lowered to 2 million RMB or less, your program will immediately get a large amount of advertising fees injected, but if you insist on adhering to such an unreasonable price of 3 million, it will be

difficult for us to continue the discussion. In the end, your program will miss out on nearly 10 million RMB of first-tier advertising rights fees for nothing. Is that worth it?”

The other advertisers were also thinking the same. They were waiting for The Voice’s program team to cave in first and lower the asking price themselves. Otherwise, without too many days left until the program started its broadcast, even if the team wanted to sell the rights then, they couldn’t do so and would end up as the biggest losers.

However, Zhang Ye did not see it that way. These people were seemingly right, but were in fact just bullshitting. “I’ll stick to what I’ve said. The minimum price I can accept is 3 million. Our production costs are clear for all of you to see as well.”

The executive of Heehee Dairy Industry frowned. “Let’s go back to the basic points and talk from there. The Voice has yet to start its broadcast, so no one knows how the viewership performance will be. Besides, from the evaluation of the public and media, it doesn’t seem too optimistic. By purchasing the advertising rights, we are also taking a risk here with our expenditure.”

“Teacher Zhang, I’ll take another step back, how about 2 million?”

“Alright, the highest offer we can make is 2 million. I’ll discuss with the company about this. They somewhat should be able to accept it.”

At this moment, the two people who did not say much finally opened their mouths.

Actually, the few of them had already communicated beforehand and discussed how they would handle this meeting. Actually, what Zhang Ye said was right. The Voice was the first variety program with a production cost of more than 100 million RMB in the industry. With the inclusion of Zhang Yuanqi, Chen Guang, and other big-time coaches, it could said that this was a really unprecedented setup. Even if many people and industry insiders were not feeling optimistic about it, they were still willing to purchase The Voice's advertising rights. Because of this, they were able to accept double of the industry's average price of 1 million, offering the highest at 2 million RMB. However, they could not accept a price that was three times the industry average.

The four of them looked at Zhang Ye and waited for him to back down.

Zhang Ye also looked at them, then picked up the desk phone and spoke on the intercom to the outside office, "Hello, Little Wang, come to my office for a moment. Yes, right now."

Dong dong.

Little Wang knocked on the door and entered his office. "Director Zhang."

Zhang Ye bluntly said, "Please help me escort our guests out."

The four of them were stunned. Escort us out?

Little Wang was taken aback, but then looked at the four of them and stated, “Everyone, this way, please.”

One of them said, “I advise you to reconsider.”

Another person said, “No one will buy it for three million RMB!”

Zhang Ye said, “Please leave. Our fees are all clearly priced. Even if no one purchases them, we will stick to this price.”

“Then forget it.”

“Goodbye!”

“Goodbye!”

When the four of them left, they felt a tinge of anger. How could you be so arrogant? For a lousy program like that, you might not even get 0.5% viewership ratings, so what makes you think that your advertising rights fee is worth 3 million RMB? Only an idiot would buy it! Just wait and perish together with the ads at your own hands! When that time comes, you will be the ones making a huge loss!

After they have left, Zhang Ye called Zhang Zuo and Ha Qiqi over. As the tasks they were responsible for were largely

progressing well, they had managed to free up a lot of the time for themselves.

“Director Zhang, you were looking for us?” Zhang Zuo asked.

Ha Qiqi blinked. “I saw the advertisers leaving? Did we get more advertising fees already?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “No, we didn’t manage to seal the deal. They couldn’t accept the price of the first-tier advertising rights fee and are not interested in the second-and third-tier ads.”

Ha Qiqi wondered, “We didn’t lower our asking price? It’s still three million?”

Zhang Ye retorted, “Why should we lower our price?”

Ha Qiqi: “...”

Zhang Ye said, “For any future advertising contracts, the two of you will assist me in handling and discussing with any advertisers coming to talk about the advertising rights fee. The price of the first-tier advertising fee will be 3 million yuan and not a yuan less. We’ll discuss with this price in mind, so if they don’t accept it, so be it.” Right now, he was exasperated by these advertisers and could not be bothered to talk with them any further. As such, he simply delegated this matter to Zhang Zuo and Ha Qiqi to handle.

Ha Qiqi said, “To my knowledge, if we don’t lower the price, it

could become extremely difficult to sell. After all, the industry average for advertising fees...If they remained unsold, then our losses will...”

Zhang Ye said, “It’s not that I don’t want to sell the rights or lower the prices, but rather that they simply can’t be reduced at all. We have already sold one of the first-tier advertising rights before this, and there’s also the 100 million title sponsorship fee from Brain Gold company. If we reduce the fees for the other companies, how will the company that purchased the advertising rights from us think? How will Brain Gold who had supported us in our most difficult times think of it? They had given us assistance when we were down but we are going to treat them like suckers?”

Zhang Zuo nodded. “That’s very true.”

Ha Qiqi sighed, “But, if the ads are left empty, the losses we will incur...”

Zhang Ye said, “We’ll only lose two ads at most, so this is not a big deal at all. Moreover, I will tell you this. The ones who will suffer the loss is not us, it will be those four companies that’ll regret later on. However, this is something that will only be revealed at a later time.”

Chapter 658 – The Broadcast Of The Program Moved Up Ahead Of Time!

On the same morning.

One after another, several people tried persuading Zhang Ye.

The first person to approach Zhang Ye was a staff member from a related department who was probably responsible for advertising sponsorship in Central TV. He said, “Little Zhang, your asking price for the advertising fee has a serious problem and deviates far beyond what the market can bear. Many people have already come to us to reflect on the situation. Although the advertising sponsorship for your program is handled by you guys in the program team and not my department’s responsibility, I still have to advise you. If those advertisers were already willing to settle for a higher than average amount, what more do you want? Right? Let’s just secure those sponsorships first. It’s better than ending up with nothing.”

“No way.”

“Little Zhang!”

“The price is already fixed.”

“You! Why can’t you be more flexible? Besides, even if your program team is not lacking any money, Central TV Department 1 lacks it.”

“The Voice will certainly make money but the way to make money is not just limited to the sales of a few advertising rights. That is only a small amount of money while the big bucks will be earned in the future. If we make those previous advertisers who have already signed with us feel disappointed because of this small amount of money, then we will lose our reputation and a lot of chances at money. Wouldn't that end up making us lose more than we gain?”

“Please give it some consideration.”

“There's no need to consider it further, Chief Zhou. Please return.”

One after another, people came to persuade Zhang Ye. Nobody knew who told them to come. Maybe it was Central TV Department 1's Deputy Director Jiang Yuan? Or the other leaders from Central TV Department 1? Could it even be the station head of Central TV?

Finally, the executive producer of the program team, Fu Sihong also came to Zhang Ye's office. He pushed the door open and entered. “Little Zhang, the boss of Heehee Dairy Industry has worked with Central TV before. I also know him personally. Why don't you just reduce the asking price to 2 million and sell them the advertising rights they want. As for the other company that have already signed, they won't know our agreed upon price with the other companies. We can keep the information confidential within our internal department and the details of the contract won't be made public. If that doesn't work, we can also give them a slight

compensation, by placing that company which spent 3 million ahead of the other companies or handle it some other way.”

Zhang Ye retorted, “Just a slight difference with the appearance order and it can have a difference of a third of the advertising fee?”

Fu Sihong said, “Let me tell you this, every program does it like that. It’s not possible that every advertiser will buy an advertising spot for the same price. There are definitely going to be some fluctuations.”

Zhang Ye replied, “I don’t care how others do it, I only care about what I do. Since I have already set a uniform asking fee for everyone, then that is the fixed price.”

“Little Zhang!” Fu Sihong became slightly angry.

Zhang Ye gave a wave of his hand. “Don’t say any more, Brother Fu. I will not agree with this way of handling the issue.”

In the end, even Fu Sihong was rejected as he left with a blackened face!

Fu Sihong was just the executive producer of The Voice in name and was sent by Central TV Department 1 to supervise this program and had very high authority. If Zhang Ye was still the newcomer at the beginning, it would be uncertain who would be the final decision maker for the asking price of the advertising rights fee. After all Zhang Ye was still a newcomer when it came to

Central TV.

But in all these days of the pre-production work for The Voice, from the program planning to the setting up of the stage to the invitation of the coaches to the securing of the title sponsor and even to the picking of contestants, all of these were handled by Zhang Ye alone. Fu Sihong did not even help much and could not be seen around at the program team office either. Perhaps he had other, more important work at the other departments, but because of that, faced with the current advertising rights fee issue, it could be said that Zhang Ye was already in full control of the situation. Of course he did not need to give in to anyone over this. Regarding how the pricing was set or what rules to enforce, he had the final say. As this was a program he had poured his blood and sweat into to create, people who were outsiders or did not help out much in the production usually, even disappearing when they were facing difficult times, were not going to have any influence over the decisions. Now that they heard that there was a lot of money involved, did they think they could just come here and dictate right and wrong?

Bullshit!

They only knew how to make trouble!

Zhang Ye was not in the mood to argue over such pointless issues with them. To be honest, he was not concerned about such a small amount of money. To him, if he had the time, he would rather go out onto the streets to canvas for some contestants with nice voices than waste time arguing with Fu Sihong over those advertisers. To get some peace, he decided it would be better for him to go

downstairs to the recording studio. After supervising the work for a while, he found a quiet place to write down delegations for the next tasks. For example, the template of the recording for the contestants' video clips and The Voice's program logo, etc.

Some of the tasks progressed smoothly.

On the matter of the advertising rights fee, it was really just a small bump and essentially harmless.

But then, just when everyone in The Voice's program team was busily making preparations for the program to be broadcast 20 days later, bad news arrived without any warning!

Zhang Ye was the first person in the program team to learn of the news!

Then, one after another, Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, Wu Yi, Little Wang, and the rest also received this stunning notice: The Voice's broadcast schedule was going to be moved up ahead of time! The new time for broadcast had been set for next Thursday!

Upon hearing that, everyone was dumbfounded!

By next Thursday??

Our studio's layout has not even been fully completed yet!

At a floor of Central TV Department 1's offices.

In the deputy director's office.

Zhang Ye was a little shocked. "Director Jiang, what's the meaning of all this?"

Jiang Yuan was looking very depressed as this matter had also caught him off guard. "Can you start the recording of the program by this week? We must broadcast the program on time by next Thursday."

Zhang Ye didn't know what to say but still replied, "When I took over this program, the production time was set for one and half months to around two months. But now, after only half a month, you're telling me we have to start broadcasting? If it was brought forward by three days, I wouldn't have said anything. If it was a week, I would also accept it. But moving it forward by nearly a month? We haven't even finish preparing much yet, so how are we going to be able to broadcast anything?"

Jiang Yuan said, "We've also just received the news. The program you were supposed to replace still had about a month before they would finish initially. Counting everything, there were still going to be four or five episodes of recording for that program and the plan was for you guys to take over the slot when their program ended. But right now, there are some problems that have surfaced. The host of that program, Zhao Yuzhuang, has had something happen in his private life. You will understand once you

check the internet, but for now, Central TV has decided to temporarily suspend him and take him off television for at least a year.”

News?

Private life?

Zhang Ye took out his cell phone and browsed through several pages before he found it. A selfie showed a woman dressed in a bathrobe and laying in bed. Beside her, Central TV host Zhao Yuzhuang was sound asleep and did not know anything about his picture being taken. His lower body was covered with a blanket but his upper body was naked and the woman was obviously not Zhao Yuzhuang’s wife. Zhang Ye immediately understood. Although these photos could not fully depict what was going on and could have been real or a setup, but as a host of Central TV, with such unglamorous pictures exposed in the media, there would usually be adverse effects. If it were other television stations, they might have tolerated this, but Central TV was definitely less forgiving. No matter how much money a host earned or how high their viewership ratings were, it was all secondary in Central TV. What Central TV emphasized most was political effects.

Zhang Ye put down his cell phone. “Can you schedule another program to fill the vacancy?”

“There’s no other choice.” Jiang Yuan said, “Recently in Department 1, only The Voice is slated to replace another program’s time slot, so there’s no one else who can take over. It will be too late even if we made a last-minute effort to produce a

program to try to gloss over this situation!”

Zhang Ye said, “But we also can’t make it in time!”

Well-meaning, Jiang Yuan said, “You all have already been preparing for half a month now and I know that time is very tight. I also know that no one has ever managed to prepare and produce such a large-scale singing talent show in half a month, but there is no other choice. Whether the program is fully prepared or half prepared, even if it has an incomplete stage or no contestants, we have no choice but to put it out and give it a try!”

“The time is too tight. Our stage, the contestants’ rehearsals, the video clips, the program’s publicity shorts, and a series of other things all aren’t completed yet.” Zhang Ye said.

Half a month?

Even a month’s time was insufficient!

Like The Voice from Zhang Ye’s previous world, from the preparations to production to finally getting broadcast, all of that would take about 6 months or even longer. Zhang Ye had directly pulled The Voice in its entirety from his previous world and that helped him save the time for planning and conceptualization and allowed him to speed up the production timeline for the program. But that was as far as it went, since the time needed for stage setup, production of the publicity shorts, and selection of contestants couldn’t be skimmed on at all! There was no way it could be saved!

Jiang Yuan said, “I know all about your difficulties, but this is the situation we’re in right now, so no matter what, you all have to do it. Little Zhang, what others can’t do, I believe you can. You are a legend in the industry and anyone would give you the thumbs up if you get mentioned. You certainly can do it! I have faith in you and confidence in your team!”

Whoa! Don’t try to suck up to me when there’s a situation like this.

Previously, didn’t you mention that my temper was bad? Yet you’re now giving me the thumbs up?

Zhang Ye repeatedly emphasized, “It’s too difficult, this is too difficult!”

Jiang Yuan stared at him and said, “Right now, all the station and I want is one word from you. Can The Voice’s program team fill the vacancy?”

Zhang Ye kept quiet.

Jiang Yuan said, “We will provide anything you need, including equipment, manpower, even Central TV Department 1’s and other channels’ resources. As long as you ask, I will help you to get it even if it means that I have to plead with the others! Oh right, about the advertising resources that we previously allocated 75 seconds of free publicity airtime to you all, after the meeting regarding Zhao Yuzhuang just now, the station also mentioned that if necessary, we can still allocate another 75 seconds of airtime

to you all as compensation. You don't need to worry about where we will get this advertising airtime from; we'll arrange it for you. You only need to submit the publicity clips and give us a time and date for when you want them to be aired. What do you think?"

Zhang Ye: "..."

Jiang Yuan said, "Regarding the station's request for your program's viewership ratings, they are also willing to lower their expectations. So long as it hits 0.7%, that will be enough. When we broadcast a hastily made production, we understand that the viewership ratings will certainly be affected as well. We have already considered such situations knowing that we have no choice but to rush it out for broadcast!"

Zhang Ye realized that Central TV had no other way out. They couldn't even give his team another day for preparations. No one could have expected such a situation to happen all of a sudden, so matter how he considered what was happening, there really wasn't anything Zhang Ye could say to this, could he? He could only clench his teeth and agree, "OK, but I can only say that I will try my best!"

However, Jiang Yuan said, "I don't want to hear that, what I want to hear is a firm answer. Can you do it or not?"

Zhang Ye contemplated for a long time before finally committing. "—Yes!"

Although he hesitated for a long time, the moment he said "yes,"

he did so with determination!

Jiang Yuan said loudly, “Good, that was what I wanted to hear from you!”

When he left Jiang Yuan’s office, Zhang Ye knew that this truly was an unforeseen disaster. The preparations were making good progress and all aspects of the production were going smoothly as well, but somehow, an incident like this happened. But Zhang Ye was not planning to give up yet, otherwise he would not have agreed. Since he agreed, he would certainly have to do it!

By next Thursday?

Only six days left?

Zhang Ye was counting the time he had left, going through every detail in his mind and thinking which part of the production could be sped up or which tasks would need more manpower and overtime.

As for cutting corners?

Zhang Ye never even gave this a thought!

The Voice must never have any “discounts”—this was Zhang Ye’s principle and also his bottom line!

Chapter 659 – A Bold Decision!

At another place.

In the program team office of The Voice.

Executive Producer Fu Sihong was not around but everyone else had already returned to the office from the main recording studio. Without definitive knowledge of the current situation, some were anxious, some were angry and some were feeling depressed. Everyone was talking about the news they heard about from the station as they waited for Zhang Ye to return from the leader's office.

“Is the rumor true?”

“I’m afraid it is!”

“Yeah, the news has already reported on it. Old Zhao’s photos have also been released.”

“So what are we going to do now? How are we supposed to handle this!”

“It’s impossible to bring the broadcast up to next Thursday!”

“Yeah, we won’t even be able to get it ready in time for broadcast in two weeks, let alone next week!”

“Ai, Director Zhang is back, he’s back!”

With that heads up, everyone did not wait for Zhang Ye to step into the office and headed straight for the door instead, surrounding Zhang Ye as he was about to come into the office.

Ha Qiqi anxiously asked, “Director Zhang, what did the leader say?”

Zhang Zuo, who was sweating in anxiety, asked, “They can’t really be asking us to rush the broadcast out by next week, can they?”

“Director Zhang, you have to speak with the leader.” Little Wang was also getting very anxious.

Zhang Ye looked at everyone. “Let me go inside first. And close the door, we’ll discuss this among ourselves.”

Outside, there were already quite a number of staff from the other program teams of Central TV Department 1 looking at them, clearly having heard about the news of The Voice being brought forward for an early broadcast.

Inside.

The office door closed.

Zhang Ye caught his breath before telling everyone, “I’ve just returned from Director Jiang’s office. The station’s meaning is for us to bring our broadcast forward to next Thursday and they have already decided. There’s no chance of changing their decision at all, but there’s a reason for this of course. Right now, we’re the only ones who can fill the slot. We have no choice other than to do as we’re told!”

‘Ha Qiqi said, “But...”

Zhang Ye interrupted, “The station will also compensate us with an additional 75 seconds of promotional airtime, together with additional personnel to make up for the manpower our team lacks. We will also get a free pass to do anything we want and everything will be given the green light, giving us the advantage of convenience now. I understand that everyone is quite opposed to this, me included. I also wish that they would give us another month or two to work on this program that we have been preparing for half a month to perfection, but there’s no one or two months anymore. Right now, time is not on our side and the circumstances are placed before us, so no matter how opposed to it we are, it won’t help the situation at all!”

Everyone was silent. Ai, yes, the situation has been set in stone, so what else could they do about it? Could they possibly refuse to adhere to the orders? That was surely out of the question!

Zhang Ye said, “Just now, I expressed my stand to the boss. Regarding this situation and the mission we’ve been given, we must complete it. Not only that, we must also complete it

beautifully! Doesn't everyone else think we can't do it? Then we must surely do it to prove to them what we're capable of! Show them the fighting spirit of The Voice's program team!"

Zhang Zuo asked, "But how should we do it?"

Wu Yi said, "There's definitely no enough time."

Zhang Ye spat out two words, "...Work overtime!"

Everyone looked at each other.

Only to hear Zhang Ye add, "I will take the lead on this. From today until next Thursday, I will live in the office. No matter what happens on set, I will be the first to get there to give instructions. I will also share a load of the work that everyone of you have on hand, so please look for me at any time!"

Ah?

You want to live here? For six days?

Everyone was stunned.

Seeing this, Ha Qiqi also bit the bullet and expressed her stand as well. If the executive director was willing to go this far, then what reason did she have to to grumble? She said, "Since Director Zhang has already put it this way, then I have no reason to not fight

alongside with him. I don't know whether the program will be produced and made ready for broadcast on time, but at least I'll know that I tried my best to make it work. Since I don't have much to do at home for the next few days, I don't mind going home late. I will come to the office early and work until 11 PM at night. Other than sleep, I will be spending most my time in the office! Everyone, let's do this together!"

Seeing the situation, Zhang Zuo also said, "I have no problems with that, even if I have to work till midnight, I should be able to take it."

Little Wang said, "I—I can work until 9 PM."

Wu Yi said, "I am fine with working until 11 PM!"

A female editor said, "I won't be able to work overtime at night, but I can come in early at 5 AM every day. It's only for six days anyway, so let's do this!"

"Count me in!"

"And me too!"

"Me three! It's just overtime anyway!"

"We've already poured so much sweat and blood into this program, we can't just let it go to waste like that!"

“Right, it’s not like we’ve never worked overtime before in the past. Let’s do it!”

With someone leading the way, everyone responded!

Seeing that, Zhang Ye felt very pleased. He said, “Thank you, everyone. I promise all of you that our efforts will not go to waste. When the program starts broadcasting, the market and the audience will certainly give us their approval. Our difficult situation now is the last hurdle as we sprint towards success; it’s the final obstacle between us and the fruits of victory. As soon as we can get over it, victory will belong to us! By that time, the harvest we’ll reap and our growth of experience will definitely be many more times than before! But right now, we need to finish this task that looks insurmountable to everyone else! We mustn’t lose faith before we even begin giving our all!”

“Right!”

“Director Zhang is correct! We will surely get it done!”

“That’s right! Who says that we won’t be able to do it?”

“We have Director Zhang leading us! So we’ll surely be able to create a miracle!”

“Well said!”

Everyone responded loudly in turn, their morale boosted by Zhang Ye's words!

Zhang Ye did not let up and said, "Beginning now, I will start with the stage setup job. Sister Qi, you'll have to arrange for the clips of the contestants to be recorded today. Shoot a few more angles and interviews, especially for those seeded contestants. Keep me updated on this as we go along. I will also be following up with you on the progress and helping out as necessary. The deadline for that will be two days later. As for the contestants, I want to go through every one of them once more. If there's not enough manpower, tell me. Let me know what people and how many you need, then I will go and request them from the station!"

Ha Qiqi replied immediately, "Understood!"

Zhang Ye said, "Brother Zhang."

Zhang Zuo said, "Please give me your instructions."

Zhang Ye looked at him and said, "We cannot afford to delay anymore on the stage construction. Get them to work on it through the night. Give the workers more money, but I want it done before Monday! The equipment testing also has to be completed before Tuesday!"

Zhang Zuo drew in a deep breath. "The stage can be finished if we work overtime on it, but for the equipment, as they are all the highest end available in the industry and many of our staff are using it for just the first time, we're still learning about it. There's

even two sets of equipment that we have not finished adjusting and are getting outside advice on how to deal with them. Regarding that, I really am unable to do much or guarantee anything. If it's fast, maybe we need just three to four days, but if there's a delay, it might even take up to a week without getting fixed, that..."

Zhang Ye said, "I want it settled Wednesday by the latest!"

When Ha Qiqi heard that, she asked in surprise, "Then when will we start studio recording? The broadcast is slated for Thursday night, don't you know!"

Everyone did not expect that Zhang Ye would push for everything to be ready by Wednesday, because then, how would the studio recording be done?

Actually, Zhang Ye had already thought of it. This was also one of the boldest decisions he had ever made. To give them all the longest duration to finish with their preparation work, he surprised everyone when he explained, "The program...we will record it on Thursday itself! We will finish the recording before 6 PM, then edit and do the post production, adding captions and getting it approved. Then at 9 PM sharp, we will go ahead with our broadcast! We can definitely meet that deadline!"

That caused an uproar!

Record it on the day of?

Broadcasting almost immediately after recording?

That was way too hasty. If they did it that way, then wasn't it basically no different from a live broadcast? What if a situation occurred during the recording? What if a problem happened during the editing and post-production stage? If anything even went wrong at any stage, they would not be able to meet the evening deadline for the broadcast! This was as good as tempting fate!

At this moment, they all knew just how bold Zhang Ye could get!

Everyone was at a loss of words at this, yet they had no choice but to admit that having been forced into a corner, if they wanted to rush the program out for broadcast, this was the only way left!

Chapter 660 – Blue-Collar Worker Zhang Ye!

At night.

Around 9 PM.

Other than those working overtime or those doing night recording, everyone in the television tower had already gone home. The offices on the different floors had already turned off their lights, as more than half of the tower was empty. However, The Voice's program team office and recording studio were still brightly lighted, with many people streaming in and out. There were sounds of construction and equipment being moved, while some people were also discussing work with urgency. There were even the loud shouts of some managers, repeating their orders to the workers.

“Put that here.”

“OK, Sister Qi!”

“Over there, hurry up!”

“We have to get the lights installed before 11 PM!”

“Director Zhang, we will definitely get the lights up before tomorrow afterno—”

“We still have other tasks to handle tomorrow afternoon. If we can save some time here today, we must do so. I want it done by 11 PM at the latest. At 11 PM, I will come and check the results!”

“OK, we’ll try our best!”

“It’s hard on you all, I know that. After we’re done with tonight’s tasks, supper’s on me!”

At this moment, a female editor came over looking very tired. She waved her cell phone at Zhang Ye and said, “Director Zhang, um...my husband is nagging at me again, so for today...?”

Zhang Ye replied, “Go home quickly then.”

The female editor said, “OK, I will be here early tomorrow!”

“Be careful going back,” Zhang Ye said with concern.

The female editor turned around and saw Little Chenchen sitting sleepily in the audience seating in the recording studio and said to Zhang Ye, “I drove here today, why don’t I help you send Chenchen back?”

Only then did Zhang Ye remember Chenchen. “Oh. It won’t inconvenience you?”

“It’s fine,” The female editor replied.

So Zhang Ye asked Chenchen, “Shall I get Auntie Yi to send you home?”

Chenchen looked at him. “Are you going back too?”

Zhang Ye said, “I can’t leave yet. I have to live here in the office for the next few days.”

Chenchen grunted. “Then I will also stay.”

Zhang Ye said, “What are you saying? There’s no suitable place here for you to sleep at all. I’ll get someone to take you back. If you’re afraid of being at home alone, why don’t I call my parents and inform them? You can go over to stay for today or I can get them to take care of you for the next two days.”

Chenchen did not say a word.

“Chenchen, I’m talking to you,” Zhang Ye said.

Chenchen ignored him and continued doing her own thing.

Zhang Ye was helpless at this and could only say to the female editor, “You go home first. Since she doesn’t want to leave, I’ll have to let her stay here with me. There’s no other way around it.”

The female editor suggested, “There’s a big sofa behind the makeup and rest area. There are also pillows and blankets upstairs. Although the conditions are not too good, it’s still fine to sleep in.”

“OK, thanks,” Zhang Ye said.

Turning around, Zhang Ye reverted his attention back to his work. Not only was he taking control of the overall situation by giving out instructions to everyone, he also involved himself in the details of the tasks. He was helping out wherever he could, even to the point of climbing up the ladder to handle the lighting setup. He was even oblivious to the fact that he had dirtied himself from head to toe while doing so.

When an executive director like Zhang Ye got down to this state, seeing this, the workers also spared no effort and put more strength into their work. No one lazed around and some of the workers who had initially intended to leave at 10 PM did not feel it was right to simply leave now. They just held back their tiredness and worked on. If the leader did not complain about being tired, how could they have anything to complain about?

At around 10:30 PM.

Chenchen could not stay awake any longer. Her eyelids drooped down heavily as her body swayed left and right as she walked toward Zhang Ye’s side. “Zhang Ye, I’m sleepy, take me to bed.”

Zhang Ye did not even turn around. “Little Zhao, help me bring Chenchen to the rest area.”

“Ai, coming!” Little Zhao set down what he was working on and hurried over. He said kindly, “Chenchen, let’s go.”

Chenchen glanced at Little Zhao and then laid her eyes back on Zhang Ye and pushed him on the back. “Zhang Ye, you take me, you have to sleep too.”

Zhang Ye said, “How can I sleep? It’s almost the deadline and I’m already planning to work continuously for the next few days. Just be good and let Uncle Little Zhao get you a blanket, then go to sleep.”

Chenchen yelled, “Zhang Ye, Zhang Ye!”

Zhang Ye ignored her as the installed lighting seemed to have a problem. He rushed up and asked, “What happened? Wasn’t it checked before the installation was done?”

Chenchen got angry.

Little Zhao looked at her and said, “There have been some changes recently and Director Zhang is the most anxious out of everyone on the program team. He’s has the most pressure on him and all he is thinking of now is how to get The Voice broadcast smoothly without any incident. So why don’t we not give Director Zhang any trouble, otherwise he’ll be even more tired.”

Though he was unsure if Chenchen understood that, she still

slowly walked away with Little Zhao. Just before she left the recording studio, she turned her head suddenly and said loudly, “Zhang Ye, you come and sleep soon as well.”

Zhang Ye acknowledged, “Alright, alright.”

Only then did Chenchen finally leave the recording studio.

However, once he became busy again, he worked until 12 AM.

After they ordered and finished their supper, all the workers left. More than half of the staff also returned home. Only three to five members of the program team staff stayed with Zhang Ye to continue working. They were all the younger male staff members and physically fitter, while another female staff member did not want to leave either, saying that she wanted to stay and continue working. However, seeing that it was already very late, he still made her go back, thinking that it wouldn't be safe if she went back any later than that.

“Director Zhang, let's continue.”

“Can you all still take it?”

“Yes!”

“I can still take it!”

“I’m fine too, I don’t usually sleep until much later than this.”

“OK, we only have a little more to finish up for today’s tasks. Let’s get it done quickly so that you all can go home and rest well.”

Another round of work began once more for them.

Moreover, the effort needed to work after midnight was much greater compared to normal working hours in the daytime. Even though the workload was more or less the same, during daytime they were in a better state of mind and had plenty of rest beforehand, so they could easily complete their tasks. However, after midnight, they were in an entirely different state of mind and fatigued after working more than 10 hours. Coupled with the feeling of sleepiness, their efficiency rapidly declined as well. They only managed to stay awake with great perseverance and physical strength!

Ten minutes!

Half an hour!

Suddenly, a small figure appeared from the rear, swaying unsteadily and walking toward them. It was Chenchen. She was wrapped in a thin blanket and found Zhang Ye in her half-asleep state. Her eyes could barely stay open and it was only through the slits of her eyes that she saw him. She then plopped herself heavily onto the coach’s chair closest to her. She adjusted herself in the seat a little and covered herself with the blanket before dozing off again, breathing quietly through her mouth.

Zhang Ye did not notice her.

But a few of the staff members discovered her in the chair a moment later.

“Uhh.”

“Director Zhang, Chenchen is here.”

Zhang Ye turned his head around and saw her. “Huh, why did you come out here? The place is such a mess and you’re sleeping here? Hurry up and go back into the rest area to sleep.”

Chenchen was woken by this and opened her eyes, only to glance at him for a moment before shutting them and falling back asleep.

Zhang Ye quickly went over and tugged at her. “Go, go, go. Be good and listen. If you’re disobedient, I will get angry.”

Chenchen lay sprawled out on the chair and mumbled a few sleepy words. But as to what she was saying, no one could make out a word.

Zhang Ye was left with no choice and could only tell the staff, “I guess that’s it for today. We’re almost done anyway, thank you for the hard work. Now go back home and sleep well.”

“All-alright then.”

“Then we’ll be going.”

“Director Zhang, you rest early too.”

The several of them were indeed feeling dead tired and knew that it was time for them to go home as well.

Zhang Ye poked Chenchen. “Come, let’s go to sleep.”

Chenchen whined but did not move.

Zhang Ye could only helplessly bend over to pick her up. A child seven or eight years old was already considered somewhat heavy. Zhang Ye could not single-handedly carry her like the landlady did and could only hold her with two hands, carrying her to the rest area and putting her back onto the big sofa.

“Go to sleep,” Zhang Ye whispered.

Without needing him to say so, Chenchen was already fast asleep.

Zhang Ye pulled the blanket over her but did not leave. He knew that Chenchen could not sleep well if she was alone and needed someone beside her. He was afraid that if Chenchen didn’t fall into a deep sleep, she would go out looking for him again. So he laid

down beside her and closed his eyes for a nap, but not fully falling asleep. After about 20 minutes, he sat up and studied Chenchen before carefully getting off the sofa and returning to the recording studio to work.

Come.

It's time to continue!

He was the only person left in the huge recording studio, so Zhang Ye went over to the control room to test out some of the equipment he had knowledge on, for instance the hanging ceiling microphones he had requested. Then, item by item, he finally got to testing the lighting rig, tinkering with the movement controls. Next, he began to fiddle around on the computer and printed several hundred audience admission passes as well as making the contestant passes. Then he created a short publicity video explaining the competition's rules for the program. Due to his experience from making advertisements, such tasks were not difficult at all for him and he could do it by himself even if no one was helping him, although it took much more time doing it alone. On top of that, he also did the voice-over for the video explaining the competition's rules.

Time was ticking away.

Zhang Ye was so absorbed in his work that he had long since forgotten all about the time. He now regarded himself as a blue-collar worker and ordered himself around as such. Titles of program executive director or famous host were all useless at this point in time. All he wanted to do right now was ensure that the

quality of The Voice would still be retained even if he had to rush it out before the deadline. Other than that, everything else was pointless and in vain!

He went all out!

It was a race against time!

Chapter 661 – What Do You Do When You Catch A Cold?

The next morning.

The sun rose.

It was not the time for most Central TV staff members to start working yet, however seven or eight people had already arrived at the of outside the TV station tower. They did not go upstairs. They instead headed to the basement recording studio.

“Sister Qi, you’re this early?”

“Little Sun, you’re here too?”

“Yeah, I left early yesterday and so decided to come earlier today. Seeing Director Zhang and the others work so hard, I felt quite bad that I went back home to sleep yesterday.”

“Achoo!”

“Yo, Sister Qi, you caught a cold?”

“Probably caught it yesterday.”

“Me too, I have a cold as well because I didn’t sleep well.”

As they were talking, they made their way to the recording studio of The Voice.

But the moment they stepped in, every one of them were shocked by what they saw. The place was brightly lighted with many of the spotlights switched on. The stage also appeared quite different from when they had left yesterday. A lot of the lighting equipment had already been installed and the area was cleaned up too, except for some construction waste that was left at the corner. The entire recording studio looked very clean and orderly. There were also some newly made admission passes placed on the audience seats, though they were not placed in plastic holders with a lanyard attached yet. But it was as good as done!

This progress was too fast!

This change had left them a little unable to react to it!

But what surprised them most was that the recording studio was not empty. Someone was still working busily—Executive Director Zhang Ye!

“Director Zhang!”

“Teacher Zhang.”

Only then did Zhang Ye, who was still busily doing some work on the computer, react and raise his head. When he saw them, he

asked in surprise, “Ah, why are you all here so early? Did you all sleep?”

Ha Qiqi who had caught a cold said in a nasally voice, “How is this still early? The sun has already risen outside!”

“Ah? Is that so?” Zhang Ye looked at his watch and realized that it was already 6 AM. As they were in the basement, there were no windows, so after working for the entire night, he had lost track of time.

An editor said, “Did you...?”

Little Sun said, “Did you not sleep the entire night?”

Zhang Ye said, “I rested my eyes for a while, so it’s fine.” Then he called them over and said, “You all came at the right time. I’m working on the publicity video right now and need some help. Let’s make the most of today and get it all done.”

Ha Qiqi ran up to him. “Quickly rest for a bit first and leave the rest to us!”

Zhang Ye did not argue with that. He really was unable to endure any much longer, so he said, “Alright. If there’s anything, call me. I will be in the back, at the makeup area.”

“OK, OK, OK.”

“Quickly rest then.”

After everyone began working on their tasks, Zhang Ye was finally able to leave and rest.

When Zhang Ye went backstage, he found Chenchen still sleeping soundly. He pulled the blanket back over her and then laid down on an adjacent sofa. He found a shirt to use as his blanket and pulled it over himself before falling asleep almost immediately.

One hour.

Two hours.

After a little more than two hours of sleep, Zhang Ye woke naturally without an alarm. He looked at his watch and got up to go back to the recording studio, showing the “ironman” side of him once more by continuing to direct the work environment.

“Director Zhang, why aren’t you sleeping more?”

“I’ve slept enough.”

“But it’s only been a short while.”

“No problem, two hours of sleep is good enough. I have to

continue with work.”

“But—!”

“Little Wang, give me the details that I requested.”

“...Fine.”

A new day had dawned, meaning that the deadline to broadcast was closer by another day. T-minus 5 days!

Actually, at this time, it was supposed to be the period when they all went full speed ahead with the preparations. However, possibly due to overworking yesterday, everyone’s energy and spirit was depleted. Along with those who had worked late into the night, and did not get enough rest or sleep, it had caused an incident which affected many people. Three of the staff were out with a cold, another one was having gastric problems, and yet another one was sent to the hospital for an IV drip due to fever and had to take half a day off. Finally, as it approached noon, everyone could no longer hold back their tiredness and another two staff members caught the cold. Although it did not affect them badly, there were still symptoms of dizziness and a heavy head. It affected the progress of their work and looking at it, it would become worse by tomorrow as the cold virus spread.

Seeing that they couldn’t take it any longer, Zhang Ye halted work and shouted, “Everyone, stop what you doing and gather. I want to say something. Little Wang, I remember that there are some disposable face masks in the rest area, can you get them and

bring them here so that everyone can use them?” This was meant to restrict the cold from spreading. If everyone had ample rest like they usually did, then there would be nothing to worry about. However, for today, it looked like every one of them would catch the cold since their immunity levels had dropped.

The face masks were brought over and distributed to everyone.

Then Zhang Ye said, “I know that everyone is feeling very tired, and there are a lot of you who caught the cold. It’s the same for me. If you give me a bed right now, I really wish that I could sleep in it for a full day without waking up. But we know that’s not possible since we still have a mission to complete. Our program team even bears a heavy responsibility. Right now, anyone can fall except for us!”

Zhang Zuo said, “Director Zhang, we understand.”

Wu Yi, also one of the people with a cold, said, “Right, we can bear with it.”

Zhang Ye then related an incident to everyone. “In the past, those who know me would know that when I recorded my talk show in Shanghai, due to various reasons, I had to finish recording the entire season’s episodes in a short period of time. At that time, I also felt that I couldn’t finish it on time. Other people’s programs could only record 2 episodes a week, but I had to finish 50 episodes in 4 days!”

4 days?

50 episodes?

Everyone listened to him seriously. They'd heard of this incident before since they were all industry insiders, so there were guaranteed to be some rumors and news going around. But they did not know the details and this was the first time they were truly hearing about it. 50 episodes in 4 days, this scared the shit out of everyone! As industry insiders, every one of them found this truly unbelievable!

Zhang Ye said, "I was in a really terrible state at that time and had a lot of stress. I thought to myself that it was impossible, that I couldn't do it, yet I'm sure you all know what the outcome was. That's right, I finished recording all the episodes. I managed to do it. I recorded the program from morning until night, then the next day, I did the same again. Every day, the audience in the studio kept changing, wave after wave, taking at least three or four groups of audiences per day. The staff were also on shift duty, resting a day and taking over duties from the other group the next day. Only I did not have a replacement to switch with. I couldn't rest, but I persisted all the way and finished recording. Do you know how I did it? I think it was due to my determination and perseverance. Regarding something like perseverance, it can really be a wonderful thing at times. If you didn't have it from the beginning, you probably wouldn't be able to do it, but if you did not doubt yourself from the start, then you could definitely achieve it! Human beings are the strongest animal in this world, so don't ever look down on humans, don't look down on yourselves! Everyone's potential is far greater than what you can imagine!"

Everyone nodded again and again.

Zhang Ye looked around at all the gathered men and women. “I’m saying this because I want to tell everyone that: we cannot stop! That we can still make another push!”

“Understood!”

“Received!”

“We have such willpower!”

“Don’t worry about it, Director Zhang! We guarantee that we will complete this mission!”

Everyone made their stand.

Zhang Ye nodded satisfied and asked, “So, what do we do if we catch a cold?”

Ha Qiqi sniffed in her mucus and answered, “Bear with it!”

Zhang Zuo said, “Hold it back with willpower!”

Wu Yi said with determination, “Use our perseverance to fight the disease!”

Each person sounded more determined than the previous!

But Zhang Ye was slightly shaking his head.

Was it wrong? Everyone was feeling unsure. What were they supposed to rely on?

Tenacity?

Character?

With that very breath that existed deep in the bottom of their hearts?

Zhang Ye declared, “What else can we do when we catch a cold? Of course we have to take our medication! How can you persevere when it comes to such things!”

Everyone collectively “fainted” on the spot!

Oh! And there you were talking about perseverance and determination for an entire day, yet when it came to the question, it totally had nothing to do with it at all!

Chapter 662 – The Voice Starts Recording!

T-minus 4 days: The selected and backup contestants for the blind auditions were finally settled upon. This was from the selection of the contestants who had qualified through the preliminary auditions earlier.

T-minus 3 days: The progression of the intro recordings for the contestants was 25% done, but due to the task being rather heavy and a lack of manpower, they could not do it as fast as they had planned. Because of this, Zhang Ye made some changes to only record the intro clips of the contestants who were due for the first episode's appearance. The other contestants would do theirs on another day since all they needed now was to meet the demands and requirements for the first episode's recording of The Voice. Once that was done, they would have another week to prepare.

T-minus 2 days: The construction of the stage was completed.

T-minus 1 day: The equipment was almost all set up and adjusted to be ready for the studio recording.

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And then it was the day itself.

At 12:30 PM on Thursday, the day The Voice was to be broadcast, they were eight and a half hours away from the scheduled broadcast timing of 9 PM!

In the recording studio.

Every staff member from the program team was gathered together.

Zhang Ye was confirming all the final tasks for everyone.

“Staff passes? Audience admission passes?”

“It’s all done! They’re all placed into the plastic holders with lanyards!”

“Post production on the intro shorts?”

“Director Zhang, it’s all done. The captions and BGM have been added in as well!”

“How about the lighting?”

“Testing is complete on them.”

“The equipment?”

“A-OK!”

“The coaches and contestants?”

“The 19 contestants appearing in the first episode are already in the waiting area backstage. Three of the coaches have already arrived and are having their makeup applied right now. Only Sister Zhang is not here yet, but we called and confirmed that they’re already on the way, about 10 minutes away from Central TV. Her manager says that Sister Zhang’s makeup is already done, so we don’t need to factor in the time for that. When the coaches are all here, we can begin the recording.”

“How about the audience?”

“They’re all here. We’re verifying their identities and distributing the admission passes to them.”

After Zhang Ye confirmed the last item on the list, he heaved a sigh of relief. All of a sudden, he felt his legs turn to jelly. He quickly took a chair which was just beside him and sat down on it heavily!

Everyone on hand also fell silent for a good three or four seconds before they broke out into cheers!

“Heavens!”

“We really completed all our preparations!”

“We made it!”

“We really made it!”

“We did it! We really did it!!”

Everyone was feeling extremely excited and unable to hold back their emotions!

Including Little Wang and a few other female staff members, they even had tears rolling down their cheeks. Even Assistant Director Ha Qiqi had to turn her head around to quietly dry her eyes! It had been too difficult! For the past six days, they'd all had it too difficult. Within the program team, every one of them had really given it their all. The exertion of working from early in the morning until late at night was simply unimaginable by anyone from the other program teams in Central TV!

Ha Qiqi and five others had a cold for the past five days but continued working despite being sick!

Little Zhao from the Equipment team was involved in an accident in which a plank fell from high up onto his leg. He suffered a sprain, but continued working without taking any time off from work!

The editor, Sister Liu, who was a mother to two daughters, had even given her family duties to her husband and mother. For the past six days, she did not take her children to and from school or had dinner at home with them. Other than sleep, she spent all her time working at the office!

This was the result of everyone's sacrifices!

This was the miracle that happened as a result of everyone striving together toward their goal!

That was why, at this moment, many of them were crying with joy. They could only express their feelings right now with tears and shouts. No one in Central TV had expected that they could complete this task without sacrificing the quality of the program, but they used the most practical approach and showed them—they could do it!

Zhang Ye suddenly announced, "I suggest we give ourselves a round of applause!"

The next moment, thunderous applause sounded and filled the entire venue!

Screams!

Cheers!

It was a scene of passion!

"Too awesome!"

"We're all great!"

“Creating a mega-scale singing talent show in 20 days is virtually unheard of in the history of the television industry! Even overseas, this was unheard of before!”

Up until now, many of the program team’s staff were actually still in disbelief that they did it. Zhang Ye was right, the unrealized capacity of a person was limitless. Many things they thought impossible to complete actually weren’t impossible. They were simply much stronger than they thought themselves to be!

At this time, Zhang Ye walked off to a corner to call the Deputy Director of Central TV Department 1, Jiang Yuan. “Director Jiang, our preparation work is all complete!”

When Jiang Yuan heard this, he said: “Great, you’ve done admirably. For other tasks that still need working on, let’s just ignore them first and finish recording the first episode. We have to rush to get the recording done in time for the broadcast. When everything is done, you all can continue to complete the stage construction and equipment tuning, but it doesn’t matter if it’s not perfect now.”

But Zhang Ye replied: “It’s not that, Director Jiang, I don’t think you understood me properly. I said that the preparation work...is all complete. The stage, equipment, and music are all completed and ready!”

“What?” Jiang Yuan was stunned.

Zhang Ye repeated: “It’s all completed!”

Jiang Yuan said in disbelief: “How did you all do it?”

Zhang Ye laughed: “We just did. Everyone worked overtime and gave it their all!”

Perhaps to Jiang Yuan and the other people of Central TV, the fact that the team for The Voice could rush in time to let the program make it to broadcast was already a miracle in itself. But they didn’t expect that this was done without sacrificing quality or missing out on some aspects. This outcome came as quite the pleasant surprise to Jiang Yuan! “Good! Good! I knew that you, Little Zhang, would surely have no problems!”

Zhang Ye dismissed: “I’m not superhuman. I couldn’t have done all this by myself. It was really down to everyone’s team effort. Regarding the bonuses, I don’t mind if I don’t get any. But when the time comes, Director Jiang, you know what to do for my team’s staff, right? Everyone has worked themselves to the bone.” Because they were willing to put in so much effort to help him, Zhang Ye also knew to fight for the interests of his program team.

“Of course, no problem.” Jiang Yuan agreed with hesitation. “Tell everyone that their month-end bonuses will be quadrupled. The performance bonus in the middle of the year will be calculated separately. And for next year’s salary adjustment, the entire team will be promoted to the next tier of their basic salary!”

Zhang Ye said happily: “Fantastic.”

Jiang Yuan asked: “What are you all planning to do now?”

Zhang Ye said: “We are doing the audience admission now, the coaches have already arrived, and we’ll start recording very soon!”

Jiang Yuan said: “Alright then, I won’t hold you back from your work. My request is still the same as before: make sure that the post-production and captions are all finished before the broadcast and after the recording has finished. Remember, the program’s viewership ratings must be at least 0.7%. That is the lowest viewership rating that the station can accept, so if the first episode receives less than favorable views, the program’s scheduled time frame might end up getting adjusted accordingly. The original plan for a show that is three months could end up being cut to one or two months only. Of course, if the viewership ratings are favorable and exceed 0.8%, the bonuses will be raised accordingly. The station will know what to do!”

The call ended.

Zhang Ye went back with this news from the station and informed everyone.

When everyone heard about the bonuses and salary increase, they all became even more excited.

Zhang Ye said, “It’s not time to celebrate yet. We still have to do our preparations properly and fight this last battle, which is also the most critical battle. This is the last critical point in our

advance, so let's not screw it up!"

"Understood!"

"No problem!"

"Director Zhang, just instruct us on what needs to be done!"

"We will listen to your commands!"

Everyone answered him with excitement.

Zhang Ye voiced his approval. "Would the departments get ready? It's time to let the audience in and start recording!"

Chapter 663 – A Shoddy Program?

At Central TV Tower.

Many of the other departments and channels of Central TV also heard about this news.

“What?”

“The Voice’s program team managed to meet the deadline?”

“Goddammit, they’re way too amazing!”

“They could even meet such a deadline?”

“What a bunch of monsters!”

“In just slightly more than half a month’s time, they started with nothing and created a stage that is for a large-scale singing talent show? Regardless of the program’s viewership ratings, that kind of a work efficiency is quite incredible!”

“This group of people must have worked crazy hard.”

“Yeah, they must all be on drugs or something!”

“A good leader can bring about a good team. Zhang Ye truly has a

few tricks up his sleeves.”

Many of the staff members of other program teams in Central TV were thinking to themselves, if such an urgent task was handed to them instead and they were told just one week before the broadcasting deadline, or even told right from the beginning when the program team was formed, they would not be able to do it. Completely setting up such a large stage in just 20 days, and even accomplishing the onerous tasks of holding the preliminary auditions, coaches invitation, pulling of sponsors and advertisers—all at the same time—, just hearing that alone would lead them to find it hard to imagine. As fellow colleagues of Central TV, they were indeed impressed by the program team of The Voice, and changed their opinions of them!

But as for the program, most of them were still skeptical of it.

“They might have met the deadline to get the broadcast out, but surely they can’t meet the targeted viewership rating that the station’s set, right?”

“That’s an unknown. I’ve heard that the station has already lowered their expectations to 0.7% for the average viewership ratings, but that’s still going to be tricky.”

“I guess we’ll find out tonight.”

“We don’t even know if they can finish recording or not. After all, time is really tight and that would contribute to possible mistakes. If it affects the broadcast quality or contributes to a

broadcast mistake, then the consequences would be terrible.”

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Meanwhile.

The outside world was not tranquil either.

All across the nation, in the streets and alleyways or in offices, discussions among the citizens were widespread.

“Ai, the broadcast of The Voice is starting tonight.”

“What? Today? I thought there was still a month until its broadcast?”

“That’s old news. The promotional commercials were already changed since last week, didn’t you see? The program that was slated to be replaced has had their host suspended over some incident, so The Voice was pushed ahead of schedule to fill the slot.”

“Whoa, isn’t that going to be a rush job then?”

“That’s true, a program that’s been rushed out like this will definitely be of terrible quality.”

“Yeah, even with ample preparation time, this program might not be good, not to mention that it has now been forced by the situation and pushed ahead of schedule. Surely the quality of the program would be affected, no? I think this production fee of over 100 million RMB is definitely going to go down the drain. They’re not likely to do any better than the other similar talent shows that are airing now. So what if they have an impressive lineup? So what if their equipment is the best? It still boils down to the contestants. It’s not going to be of any help even if Sister Zhang is holding down the fort. The audience won’t watch the show from beginning to end without changing channels just because of her, right? No matter what, the coaches are really just the supporting cast of the show.”

“That’s what I think too.”

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On the internet.

Topics regarding The Voice were rife.

“They’re starting the broadcast today!”

“It’s too soon. I only saw the promotions for it a while ago and they’re already broadcasting it today? Will this short amount of time be enough for them to make the show good? I quite like Zhang Ye, so I’m really worried for him. Could the fairy tale of Zhang Ye’s miraculous viewership ratings come to an end just like this?”

“Legends don’t last forever. They always get disproven someday.”

“But that can’t be blamed on Zhang Ye. Who asked that host to be involved in an affair and even get into trouble after photos were published? Otherwise, The Voice would not have been so hastily pushed to begin its broadcast!”

“Ai, this was all destined!”

“Teacher Zhang’s luck this time was really terrible!”

“Yeah, he was pretty down on his luck for this incident. I was initially quite looking forward to Teacher Zhang’s new program, but now this has happened. I don’t feel too good about it anymore. Just thinking of how the program only had a preparation period of 20 days, I doubt it’ll be any good. The only objective of this program now is to fill the hole in Central TV’s programming lineup, so I just hope that this is not a stopgap measure. At the very least, if they let the program come closer to completion, I’ll be very satisfied. Teacher Zhang is really unlucky. Just as he was getting things going, he had to meet with such a situation.”

Some comments were still considerably positive.

But the comments from some others were full of malice.

“This lousy program would not have been good anyway.”

“I’ve never thought that it would perform well, so it’s definitely going to be worse now!”

“Zhang Ye is really stupid. He had a rather interesting program but he sold it to Beijing Television instead and left himself with such a broken talent show to produce. He’s even pulling such silly gimmicks like claiming that the program will be judged only by listening to one’s voice. What is that? What’s so interesting about it? For all the other talent shows, not only are the contestants good-looking, they can also sing well. But what about The Voice? The only feature is that the contestants will need to sing well? No matter how bad-looking they are, it won’t matter? Then why would we want to watch your program? I’d rather watch someone who is pretty and can sing well!”

“Well said.”

“Zhang Ye doesn’t want to walk a proper path, but rather insists on walking into a dead end alley!”

“Besides, Zhang Ye seems to have the intention to move from fronting a show to working behind the scenes?”

“Oh? Why do you say that?”

“Just take a look at the past programs that Zhang Ye did rather well with. Those programs all involved heavy participation from the host or even depended fully on the host to make the program interesting. Like Zhang Ye’s Talk Show and Lecture Room, both

these programs needed the host, Zhang Ye, to present the show from start till end. It all depended on the capability and talent of his mouth to make it work. He knows what others don't, he can say things that others can't—it's like he's the type of host no one can replace by simply replacing his role. But what about the singing talent show? For this genre of program, the host doesn't play a big role in it! What could the host add to the program? All they do are the announcements, present the advertising slogan, what else? There's basically nothing else. The review of the performances and mingling with the contestants are all up to the coaches, while singing is the job of the contestants. All of these have nothing to do with the host at all, so now do you all understand why people are not that optimistic about The Voice? Zhang Ye has thrown away his biggest advantage and relegated himself into becoming a supporting character. No! It's more like he has given himself the most trivial of roles!”

“That's sounds right.”

“When you analyze it that way, it really makes sense. This type of program could use anyone for its host and nothing would change. Anyone can do it, so the value of the role is not that significant at all!”

“Right, even I could do it!”

“Saying something on stage would only take a few lines. It seems like Zhang Ye might really be intending to retreat behind the scenes?”

“Zhang Ye's new program was a jump too far from his usual

style. It's full of contradictions and has so many inexplicable issues. I really don't understand how a professional like Zhang Ye could make such a mistake! Could it be that Zhang Ye has been used to working at low-level places like those local channels or online television stations, but when he arrived at the biggest television station in the country, he could not acclimatize to the culture and workings of it? And that affected him so much that he could not bring out his usual standard? Or could it be that this was his standard all along? It was just that all of us had imagined him to be too awesome in the past? Always expecting that Zhang Ye would be able to create the next miracle?"

"Hur hur, I guess no miracle will be happening no matter what this time."

"Yeah, a miracle is only called a miracle because it doesn't happen easily."

At this time, Zhang Ye's old bro, old classmate, and old colleagues all started standing up and speaking for Zhang Ye.

Crosstalk actor Yao Jiancai posted: "Never, ever look down on Zhang Ye. Sometimes when it comes to things people don't feel optimistic about, my Old Bro Zhang will end up doing it better—that's what my past experiences tell me!"

Peking University's Chinese Department Teacher Su Na: "It hasn't even broadcast yet, so nothing is set in stone."

Beijing Television Host Dong Shanshan: "Based on what I know

about Zhang Ye, when The Voice gets broadcast, it will definitely turn out different from what everyone is imagining in their minds. Believe me, I guarantee it! So, let's wait and see! Zhang Ye has never disappointed everyone before, so I don't think he will this time either!"

Songstress Zhang Xia: "Little Zhang is the most hardworking person I've ever met. For this program, Little Zhang has given a lot, so much so that no one could possibly start to imagine. I hope that everyone can be a little more tolerant of Little Zhang, as being the executive director, executive planner, and host of The Voice, he has had it very difficult in recent days!"

Singer Chen Guang: "Please give your support to The Voice of China!"

Singer Fan Wenli: "Tonight at 9 PM, let's meet on TV!"

Zhang Yuanqi's manager, Fang Weihong, also posted out of the blue: "Having worked with Teacher Zhang Ye many times, it has always been a very enjoyable experience. Even though Sister Zhang has never agreed to join such talent shows in the past, she decided to join this time because the program team has given us an offer we couldn't reject. We were also attracted to the show because of Zhang Ye's reputation, since we know what he is capable of, and therefore, we trust him too. Here's something that I can reveal at the moment: for tonight's broadcast, there will be a theme song for the show that will be performed during the opening. Although the song is going to be performed by the four coaches, the lyrics and melody were all created by Executive Director Zhang Ye."

“Wow, there’s going to be a new song.”

“That’s true, we should at least watch it before judging!”

“Right, we’ll only know if it’s good or not if we watch it. It’s still too early to say anything now!”

“We should stop scolding Zhang Ye. I heard that he has not returned home for the past week and did not sleep much either, all because he was busy rushing the new program to make the broadcast deadline. Grandma Zhang is right, we should all be more tolerant of Zhang Ye, although the clown can be quite infuriating at times and often offends others!”

“Haha, it’s exactly because he has offended too many people, so whenever anything happens to him, many people come to doubt and criticize him, never missing out on an opportunity to do so. Actually, those people are just hoping to see Zhang Ye fail for once! They really want to see Zhang Ye make a fool of himself for once!”

“Yeah, countless people have already been slapped countless times by Zhang Ye. They are all hoping he will make a spectacle of himself one time so that they can remember that look of his when it happens. The situation with his new program right now is the most likely chance that it will ever happen.”

With so many celebrities supporting Zhang Ye, the discussion surrounding the topic once again blew up. This could also be considered as the last round of publicity bombardment before the broadcast. As the four coaches were under the payroll of the

program now, they of course had to do their part and speak up for The Voice.

As for Yao Jiancai and Dong Shanshan, needless to say, it was because they had a very good relationship with Zhang Ye. Yes, by rights, as Beijing Television's host, Dong Shanshan should have been more careful with some of her stand on things. Logically, it was also not good of her to help a Central TV host promote their show, but Zhang Ye and Beijing Television Station also had a good relationship, having fought, gotten embarrassed, and even helped each other when there were difficulties. So even though Dong Shanshan had helped Zhang Ye do a some publicity, it was nothing improper. With the added relationship of old classmates between the two of them, the station would not use this as an excuse to criticize her. It should also be mentioned that Dong Shanshan was getting popular at the moment and was already moving up toward the D-list Celebrity Rankings, so she could no longer be considered the same rookie she had been when she first joined the station.

Chapter 664 – Zhang Ye’s Rebuttal:

Admiring The Mountains!

A set of poems (望岳) by Tang Dynasty poet Du Fu

The discussions did not die down.

Some of them were even contributed by people who were employed by The Voice’s program team to drive discussion.

If they had their way, this atmosphere would probably have lasted all the way until the broadcast at night and would have definitely boosted the viewership situation.

However, at this moment, a certain northern television station’s program team’s supervisor suddenly said something. Without holding back he unexpectedly posted: “A program like The Voice whose act of inflating the joining pays for the guests can only be described as despicable. This has already negatively impacted the normal operations of the other program teams of the television industry! Just a short moment ago, a celebrity who had already agreed in principle a month ago that they would be joining our reality television program backed out of the deal. I won’t reveal who it is, but that person asked us: ‘Why was The Voice able to pay their guests who were only be doing judging duties a sum from 10 to 40 million RMB as joining pay, but your program team can only give 7 million?’ I did not know how to answer that. I totally didn’t know how to answer that question!”

The coaches’ joining pays were public knowledge since the beginning, not because the program publicized it since it was

meant to be confidential, but because it was leaked by someone.

From the content of that person's rant, it could be deduced that the celebrity who had backed out was likely a B-list celebrity who was as popular as Chen Guang and Fan Wenli, or possibly even more popular. But having been promised a joining pay of only a little more than half of the couple's, the celebrity was probably felt it was unfair. That was of course understandable, since competition in the entertainment industry was quite strong and such comparisons were also very common!

If you drove a 1 million RMB car?

Then I must drive a 2 million RMB one!

If you're wearing a low-cut evening gown?

Then I will wear a transparent one!

In any case, no one wanted to be outshone by others and all these outward comparisons were not only down to gratify their vanity, but also a tactic for them to gain more fans. Of course, the joining pays were also considered as such. Oh, our popularity is more or less on the same level, so what do you have that you deserve 10 million while I only get 7 million? If the joining pay became publicized, then the celebrity would also suffer a loss of face, so they might as well not join at all!

This Weibo post caused quite an uproar, so much so that even the

poster did not think that there would be so much response!

Following that, countless other industry workers surprisingly said something too.

A certain southern television station's program team's manager posted: "It's the same for us. In three of our programs, there were two celebrities who backed out of their contracts at the last minute and caused a serious delay in the program's production progress. Now that we have to find other people at the last minute, when many of those celebrities heard about the joining pay we were going to offer, they all felt it was too low. I would like to ask Zhang Ye right now, and ask The Voice's program team too. Based on what reason did you all pay out twice the price of the industry average? I would also like to ask the regulators: when it comes to such bad-intentioned acts to raise the joining pays, shouldn't someone be held responsible?"

Seeing this, a CEO of some program production company also stepped forward to give his point of view: "Ever since The Voice's 4 celebrity guest coaches' joining pays were revealed, every talent show domestically has seemingly been negatively affected. Regarding such misconduct, there should be a serious crackdown on such behavior! It needs to be strictly boycotted! The market for variety shows is basically at a low point. With the advancement of the internet, invasion of foreign programs, and the existence of many forms of other types of entertainment, it has caused this embarrassing situation that the variety shows are faced with. The glorious days are just a thing of the past now—and under such circumstances, variety shows are difficult to do in the first place and not earning money—yet Zhang Ye is still trying to raise the prices? Isn't he just making the waters murkier?"

Another television industry personnel also said angrily: “Zhang Ye, we won’t stop you if you’re in this alone. If you screw up your show, it has nothing to do with us, but don’t you drag us in either! Don’t drag us from the variety television industry with you into your grave! The market was spoiled by people just like you!”

“Yeah, we feel the same! Things are getting more and more difficult to do now!”

“Right, whenever any new program wants to invite a celebrity as a guest now, nothing can be worked out at all as they’re all looking at joining pays in the region of those given at The Voice! Their expectations have all been raised!”

“If the fluctuation of the pay is just around 10%, it’s fine. But in just such a short period of time, they’re expecting an increase of 60-70%. That’s unacceptable! This is truly an act of destruction! Just why are all you from The Voice paying such a high fee? You’re only making a normal and overdone singing talent show, it’s not like it’ll be some world-class program that will get crazy high viewership ratings!”

“Appealing for all industry insiders to boycott such behaviors!”

“That’s right!”

“We have to boycott such behavior!”

“If this is going to be a popular variety show that gets 1.2% in viewership ratings, then the joining pay of 10 million for a B-list celebrity would still be a fair deal. But the issue here is that you’re not. Everyone in the industry has already analyzed and considered your program and said that the hosting won’t be anything special. It’s even overused content and the type of show that will only attract the minority audiences or a cult following, thus only possibly getting a 0.6% viewership rating tops. Even the majority of the viewers are probably only going to be pulled in by Sister Zhang and the married couple!”

“Can the regulators set a standard for the norm?”

“I suggest banning on the broadcast of The Voice!”

“I’ve already made a report to the regulatory department.”

“Me too!”

“If its just the few of us doing so, we won’t be able to do much, so let’s do it together, everyone!”

“Right, although it might not be of any help and the Regulatory Department might not have handled an incident like this before, we must still stand together and boycott such behavior!”

Countless industry insiders were galvanized, feeling that the offenses were too numerous to record and were calling for strong action to be taken on The Voice and Zhang Ye. Basically, they

knew that the regulators were not likely to take any action. After all, the contracts had already been signed and the show approved beforehand too. At most, they would give a warning to Zhang Ye and his team, but not take any realistic control of such matters. But no matter what, they still collectively called for a boycott, because they needed to get it off their chests and were jealous of Zhang Ye getting a 100 million title sponsorship so easily. They all wondered why such a lousy program would be worth such a large sum of money—they were essentially refusing to accept this fact!

The negative voices were growing louder and louder!

This incident was growing bigger and bigger!

Admittedly, no matter if they were positive reviews or negative voices, as long as the topic surrounded it and had a certain degree of interest, then it could be hyped up and helped bring more attention to the show. However, this was on the premise that the negativity of the issue couldn't be more than 80%, or it would affect the program's reputation. If that happened, then it would not increase the popularity of the program but lead to a huge loss of potential viewers!

As expected, with the constant talk on this topic, a poll regarding The Voice posted on Weibo earlier was already showing “uninterested” to be leading “interested” by a long shot!

Uninterested: 70.5%

Interested: 27.4%

The rest of the votes were for “unsure.”

The snowball was gathering into an avalanche as the negativity became increasingly apparent!

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At Central TV.

In the recording studio of The Voice.

The audience was progressively entering the studio using their entry passes and getting seated. Already a third of the audience seats were taken up and among the coaches, Chen Guang was the first to be ready and had already come to the stage to take his seat in his coach chair. A staff member was explaining to Chen Guang the functions of the chair and what he needed to take note of. As they were rushing for the past week, they had yet to let the coaches test those functions.

Zhang Ye spoke into the walkie-talkie: “Has Sister Zhang arrived?”

A fuzzy voice came from the other end: “She’s already here, I repeat, she’s already here.”

Zhang Ye acknowledged: “Received. Please inform the other

three coaches to come to the stage once they're ready. We need to get them familiarized with the equipment first and test the earset microphones."

Their communication ended.

At this time, Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and a few others ran over to look for Zhang Ye. When they found him, they said, "Director Zhang, something's happened!"

"What happened?" Zhang Ye asked, looking very worried.

Ha Qiqi pointed to her cell phone's screen. "A staff member from the publicity team just informed me that many industry insiders have denounced and called for a boycott against our show. It seems they've brought this matter up to the Regulatory Department. They're complaining that we inflated the joining pays and spoiled the market!"

Zhang Zuo angrily said, "The regulators will surely not bother themselves with this matter. Those people really have nothing better to do. It's easy for them to say, but in getting someone like Sister Zhang who doesn't ever take part in talent shows to join us, we definitely had to spend more money to be able to persuade her. Don't we also wish to be able to do it with just 20 million, but is that even possible?"

Little Wang added, "They're purposely saying damaging statements about us!"

Wu Yi said solemnly, “We need to issue a statement to fight back! With the fuss that they’ve kicked up, it won’t do for us to just keep quiet! Everyone is going to see how we respond to this!”

Many of the program team’s staff were feeling extremely indignant.

In the past, when everyone was doubting that their program, they did not feel much, probably because they had not developed a sense of ownership of the program yet. But now, having worked day and night to crunch the production to meet the broadcast deadline, they had all developed deep feelings for it. This was the result all of them had made by fighting together for many days, but now that they were being spoken badly about and boycotted, of course they would not take it lying down!

“Director Zhang!”

“What do we do?”

“Say something.”

Everyone said, one after another. Many of the staff who were busy with other work had also come over.

Zhang Ye looked at them. “What else can we do? Just handle well the tasks you have at hand and create a great show that will leave everyone speechless. That’s the best response we can give to those skeptics. Just leave everything else to me. Quickly prepare for the

recording already, it's about to begin!"

Seeing his response, they finally dispersed and went back to their tasks.

Zhang Ye took out his cell phone and browsed to where all those denouncers were talking about his program. After scrolling through all the comments, he knew that he had to say something and couldn't just stay silent. As such, Zhang Ye responded. Before this, it had almost been a month since he had last said something online, so this was to be the first Weibo post he was going to make ever since he started production on the new program.

Offstage.

Some of the eagle-eyed audiences saw it.

"Ah, what's Zhang Ye doing?"

"Quick, look. That looks like the interface of Weibo."

"Did Teacher Zhang just update his Weibo?"

"Quickly go and take a look!"

"He must be giving his response to those industry peers. Do you know how many people from other television stations are scolding him online right now?"

Many of the audience members who were already seated rapidly took out their phones to check Weibo.

Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo might have been busy with their work, but they also secretly took out their phones to see what sort of a response Zhang Ye gave.

At the same time, many people had noticed Zhang Ye's Weibo being updated.

Fan Wenli, still backstage, looked at her phone and quietly exclaimed.

Yao Jiancai was with a filming crew, swiping his thumb down to refresh his Weibo feed.

Chenchen's form teacher, Zhao Mei, also launched Weibo on a school computer when her colleagues mentioned it to her.

Those variety show industry peers who collectively condemned Zhang Ye, the media reporters, and those citizens who liked or disliked Zhang Ye were all paying attention to Zhang Ye's Weibo, which had been updated at a sensitive time. Tens of thousands of pairs of eyes were all focused there simultaneously. All of them thought that Zhang Ye would explain why their program team raised the joining pays to such an astronomical sum, to clarify the difficulties that had made them come to such a decision, to explain that their program was deserving of the 100 million title sponsorship.

But the truth was that Zhang Ye did not want to explain anything. He didn't write a single word of explanation at all. Under everyone's scrutiny, he posted a poem. A poem that would infuriate his industry peers, leave The Voice's program team staff in shock, and stir up the blood-pumping passion of his fans!

How to describe the [Revered Peak](#)?

Mt. Tai

Towering over all Shandong with endless green.

Heavenly beautiful splendor Nature gathered;

the shaded north side cut off from the south side's sheen.

Clustering clouds cleanse the cracks in the heart,

eyes strain watching homebound birds fly through the ravine.

Someday I shall ascend your highest heights

to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene.

Chapter 665 – Fighting With His Peers Again!

In the recording studio.

The audience members who had already entered the venue were seething with excitement!

“Quick, go and take a look!”

“Quickly look at Zhang Ye’s Weibo!”

“Oh my God! Teacher Zhang is still not afraid of offending other people!”

Ha Qiqi’s hand holding her cell phone was trembling as well!

Zhang Zuo and Wu Yi also turned around and looked at Zhang Ye with stunned expressions!

.....

This poem was going viral!

Right after it appeared on Weibo, numerous netizens got goosebumps!

“F**k!”

“Where’s the interpretation? There’s no interpretation?”

“This poem is way too elegant!”

“The first few lines were still fine, but that last line really took the cake!”

“That’s our Zhang Ye!”

“That’s right, that’s the Zhang Ye I know!”

“Awesome!”

“It’s fine if Teacher Zhang doesn’t make a move, but when does, it’s always earth shattering! This is as good as trampling on all his peers’ shows! This is declaring war on the entire variety show industry!”

“In the entire entertainment circle, only Zhang Ye would dare say such things!”

“When Teacher Zhang disappeared from Weibo for such a long time, I thought that his character had changed for the better. But when I saw this poem today, hahaha, Zhang Ye is still the same Zhang Ye I knew from before!”

After reading this poem, many of the netizens felt quite shocked. Zhang Ye had not written a poem in a long time, but now that he unexpectedly came out with one, it immediately shook the literary circle. Everyone was familiar with Zhang Ye's poems, having seen his love poems with deep emotion and his sharp and sarcastic poems. But for old-style poems like this one, people had hardly ever seen Zhang Ye writing them. Today was indeed another eye-opener for many of them since they got a chance to witness it. Zhang Ye really could write any kind of poem!

Zhang Ye was never a person who did things by the book. The more people felt he would do something a certain way, the more he would not. Give an explanation of the situation to you all? Clarify the reason to you all? There was no need for something like that! But most of them did not see much of this style of ancient poem written by Zhang Ye. This was a very famous poem set: Admiring the Mountains by Du Fu from Zhang Ye's previous world. It was comprised of three ancient poems in total. Zhang Ye took one of them, the one that was the most well-known and famous to everyone in his previous world. This poem of Du Fu's was probably trying to express a different meaning, but in this moment and situation Zhang Ye used it, it delivered yet another meaning!

It was the air of defiance and domination!

Just this passage of the poem was enough to surpass thousands of words. What Zhang Ye wanted to say and express were all in the poem. Whether you all are collectively boycotting or denouncing me, my new program and I are destined to reach to the highest peak in the variety world from where we can look down on all of you!

Someday I shall ascend your highest heights!

To see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene!

“Very powerful!”

“Brilliantly said!”

“Teacher Zhang, we’re cheering you on!”

“Zhang Ye! You have our support!”

“A bunch of buffoons. Haha, Teacher Zhang basically did not think of them as a threat to him!”

Zhang Ye’s fans had all been jolted out!

Similarly, those peers who were calling for a boycott of Zhang Ye exploded with rage. They thought that Zhang Ye would issue a clarification or just remain silent all the while, but who could have expected that he would directly throw out such a defiant old-style poem, not showing a shred of respect for his peers!

“‘To see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene’? Zhang Ye! Your words are too arrogant!”

“You all should be content if your new program can achieve at

least 0.6% viewership. Such an abruptly broadcast program is likely to be full of mistakes, so there might not even be a 0.5% viewer rating. Yet you still want to reach the top of the variety world? And you even want to look down on all the other variety shows? Are you still dreaming or what? Can't you have just a tiny bit of objective judgment toward your own show? A simple analysis easily shows that The Voice of China is only going to be a cult TV show that the majority of the citizens won't be able to accept!"

"Zhang Ye, don't be too conceited!"

"That's a bold claim! Ha! Let's see what you're going to do after today's broadcast!"

"I admit that your previous shows were very special and the viewership ratings were also very high, but The Voice will absolutely be your worst failure. You want to ascend to the highest heights? Alright, since you don't believe me, just wait and see. I want to see for myself just what kind of viewership rating this show you're so confident of can get!"

"Huh, let's see if The Voice's viewership ratings can surpass my show first!"

"Director Zhao, your show's viewership rating is 0.75%! How the heck could he surpass that? He is only good at talking! And spouting empty talk!"

"I feel very amused that he's now being so fearless. We're

veterans who have spent many years in the variety circle. The more experienced we are, the more we should be in awe and know our own weaknesses and limitations. Zhang Ye is not considered a newcomer anymore but why is he still so overconfident, thinking he can ascend to the highest heights? As the host of a singing show, your job is only to make announcements and present the advertising slogans, so what heights are there for you to ascend to!”

“This bastard is really annoying!”

“Don’t just talk! Use your viewership ratings to show us what you’ve got!”

“Right! Aren’t you thinking of looking down on all variety shows? Then let’s compare our viewership ratings!”

Zhang Ye’s peers were initiating waves of accusations and criticisms at him. After reading the poem, some of those who had not participated in the boycott of Zhang Ye previously became so angry that they came out to boycott him as well!

The “flames of war” were spreading fast!

Zhang Ye had poked on a hornet’s nest!

.....

At a different place.

Little Wang said indignantly, “Director Zhang, this poem is just too impressive!”

Zhang Ye laughed. “It’s passable.”

Chen Guang who was testing his microphone on the coach’s chair also saw the poem on Weibo. He raised his head, looked at Zhang Ye from afar, and gave him a thumbs up.

From backstage, Coach Fan Wenli came out. “Director Zhang, you wrote another poem?”

Zhang Ye responded, “You saw it?”

“I saw it when I was having my makeup applied. The more I read the last line of the poem, the more I like it. Your literary talent is definitely in the country’s top ten!” Fan Wenli commented, “If not for your young age and the many literature masters still alive, no one would say otherwise if we proclaimed you as the country’s best in literature!”

In the poetry and couplet domains, and among those authors and poets who were still alive, if Zhang Ye said he was number two, probably no one would dare say they were number one. However, since literature was still dependent on the accolades that you had, not only did you need to have qualifications, your own works, and have received a prize at some point, you also needed to have an authority to back you. Zhang Ye indeed did not have much to show for in his prose, since *Ghost Blows Out the Light* and *Legend of*

Wukong were just web novels. Having only just debuted as well, he had not received any prizes yet, so his qualifications were naturally considered little. Fan Wenli rating him in the country's top ten was already great praise for him.

Zhang Ye waved it off. "I don't deserve that praise."

However, Ha Qiqi had an expression of immense concern. When she saw those fellow peers slandering The Voice and demanding their program be suspended from broadcast, she felt very angry and wanted to join in the scolding as well. Although she was angry, she did not expect Zhang Ye to compose such a poem on the spot. This was no longer just a retaliation; instead it was a declaration of war against all variety shows. "Director Zhang, if you say that, don't you think we will offend too many people?"

"Would it?" Zhang Ye didn't seem to care.

Ha Qiqi: "..."

Zhang Zuo: "..."

Would it? What do you think!

Their program team of The Voice was essentially taking the stance of offending everyone in the industry with this poem! This was the stance of belittling all the "heroes" in the industry! If it were just those programs with low viewership ratings, it wouldn't be so bad. They were, after all, Central TV Department 1, and if

faced with those programs on provincial channels or those satellite channels' shows with less investment and lower viewership, they definitely would have something to show for. However, Zhang Ye's carpet bombing was aimed at all variety shows. This included those outstanding shows with 0.8% to 0.9% viewership ratings, And even the very popular programs with up to 1.0% or 1.1% viewership ratings! Uttering those lofty claims like "To see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene"—would that really be OK? Would that really not be a problem? And this was also including all the variety shows on Central TV's channels, no?

However, Zhang Ye thought nothing of it. Such a small matter like this might be considered serious to others, but to him, he had already gotten used to it. The infighting was not something new at all. When he was in radio broadcasting, he fought against the radio broadcasting world. When he was in the literary world, he fought against the literary world. When he was in the crosstalk world, he fought against the crosstalk world. So now that he had joined the variety show world, if he did not fight them, it simply wouldn't be Zhang Ye's style!

Zhang Zuo hurriedly said, "Aren't we...making overly bold claims?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "Why? Don't have any confidence?"

"It's not that I don't have confidence, I'm just afraid those people will use your poem to find trouble with us and attack us." Zhang Zuo said, "When the viewership ratings are out, even if our viewership ratings are quite high, there will be surely some other variety shows in the same time slot getting higher viewership

ratings than us. This is like gifting them something to criticize us with, and they will certainly go around yelling, ‘Didn’t you guys want to belittle all the heroes in the world? Why are the viewership ratings of your program not higher than X-program then?’ How are we going to answer that?”

Ha Qiqi nodded as she also had the same concerns.

But Zhang Ye blinked a few times in quick succession and rebutted, “Why must there always be shows in the same time slot with higher viewership ratings than us?”

Zhang Zuo was stunned. “Ah?”

Ha Qiqi was also stunned. “Why does there need to be a reason for that? There will surely be some shows that can get higher viewership ratings than us, such as the reality TV show whose rights were purchased from overseas. It has been broadcasting since the beginning of the year and the average viewership ratings are 1.4%. Then there’s another foreign copyrighted program which got a similar viewership rating of 1.3%!”

Zhang Ye asked again, “Why you all think that their viewership ratings will be higher than ours?”

Upon hearing that, Zhang Zuo said astonished, “Are you really thinking that The Voice of China can surpass all those variety shows broadcasting in the same time slot?”

When those words came out of his mouth, many of the surrounding staff from the program team looked over with shocked expressions.

Zhang Ye smiled and corrected him, “It’s not that I think we can, but that I’m certain it can be done!”

Wu Yi gawked. “Don’t tease us like this anymore, we’re really scared!”

Her voice cracking, Little Wang said, “Teacher Zhang, are you serious?”

A female editor was stunned. She said, “Didn’t we set a targeted viewership rating of 0.7%? Why did it change again?”

“0.7% is the station’s target for us.” Zhang Ye said calmly, “But it wasn’t set by me. My expectations are much higher than this target by a lot!”

Everyone was speechless!

0.7% was still low? How many of the current variety shows broadcasting in the country had ever exceeded 0.7% in viewership?! There should only be a dozen or so of them, right? But your expectations were higher? And even much higher at that? Could we stop joking around, Director Zhang! This was a program that a majority of the people were pessimistic about! If we could accomplish the station’s target of 0.7% viewership, we would

already be satisfied! That would already be enough to create a legend!

Everyone could not understand why Zhang Ye felt so confident.

Zhang Ye did not get angry when he noticed their doubts. He said to them, “I know that everyone has doubt, but that’s because you all have not seen the entire, actual process of the program’s recording yet. There are some details I did not tell all of you beforehand and that aren’t stated on the program proposal.” He smiled. “For instance, my segment as the host.”

Ha Qiqi asked confused, “The host’s segment?”

Little Wang said, “Aren’t you just going to read the advertising messages?”

Zhang Zuo said, “You want to add some lines to the host’s script at the last minute? Haven’t you already decided on the lines? If you change it now, will there be enough time?”

Everyone had read Zhang Ye’s script for the host before, as it had been written out by him long ago, but no one found it to be anything special. What sort of tricks could even be added to it?

Zhang Ye grinned. “The monologue hasn’t been changed.”

Ha Qiqi said, “Then why are you saying...”

Zhang Ye said, “You’ll all find out soon.”

Chapter 666 – Setting The Whole Studio Ablaze!

The audience gradually filled up the studio.

“Could the people in front walk a little faster?”

“Hey, don’t squeeze.”

“Ah, I saw Zhang Ye!”

“I saw him too! Wow, there’s also Chen Guang!”

“What was with the poem from earlier? Isn’t Zhang Ye busy with the show?”

“Zhang Ye took some time to post it onto Weibo. I could see his phone’s screen from here. In the past, I’d only read Zhang Ye’s poems online. But I could have expected today to be such a good day, being able to see Zhang Ye compose the poem live on the spot. It’s just as the legends described: his poems weren’t prepared ahead of time or composed by others on his behalf. He did it all spontaneously on the spot!”

“That poem was absolutely the best!”

“But I wonder how the show will perform.”

“Aiyo, this stage is really huge!”

“Yeah, the stage is dazzling, it must have been very expensive to setup. Compared to those other talent shows’ stages, they’re basically worlds apart!”

“I could never have imagined the stage to be so big! It’s just a singing talent show, why did they set it up to look like the Spring Festival Gala! Is that even necessary?”

“It’s no wonder this is a production of over 100 million. They really broke the bank for this!”

After the audience had entered and been seated, they began conversing with one another.

From the other side, Ha Qiqi personally led a group of audience members into the studio. The reason why Ha Qiqi had to do this herself was because the members weren’t just any typical audience members. They were the CEO of Brain Gold company and its upper management team, along with some staff of the company. They had communicated earlier with Zhang Ye and expressed their intent to come watch the recording of the first episode of the show. Zhang Ye naturally did not reject and immediately made arrangements for their seating. Actually, the program team’s staff also knew that 100 million for the title sponsorship fee was a large sum for Brain Gold Group and not an amount they could afford to lose. The reason for them coming to see the recording was a pretext for inspection, as they wanted to see for themselves

whether they would have the chance of recouping this 100 million yuan expenditure and help advance their company to another level.

After the title sponsors arrived, the program team was under tremendous pressure. If they somehow screwed it up, they really would have no way to answer to the Brain Gold company.

Ha Qiqi politely said, “CEO Wu, please have a seat over here.”

Wu Mo acknowledged her and took his seat.

“I’ll get Director Zhang to come over,” Ha Qiqi said, immediately turning to walk away.

However, Wu Mo stopped her. “There’s no need, just let him work. We can handle ourselves over here. I understand that this is the critical moment right now, so there’s no need to disturb him.”

Ha Qiqi said, “Alright.”

At the door of the staff corridor, Central TV Department 1’s leaders had also arrived.

Jiang Yuan was leading the group, and there were a few other middle-aged men and women beside him. Some were leaders and department heads; all had leadership roles at Central TV Department 1. They had come to the venue for the recording of the program.

Zhang Zuo went to welcome them, “Director Jiang, Director Lu, Chief Li...”

Jiang Yuan waved a hand. “Carry on with what you need to do, don’t worry about us.”

“Then...then alright.” Zhang Zuo hesitated for a second but went back to his job.

Not long after, people from the other program teams in Central TV also silently joined. They had not informed The Voice’s program team that they would be here, so they casually found some seats in the back rows and sat down. They were talking with each other, though nobody knew what they were discussing. Clearly, the first episode’s recording of The Voice was not only in the public eye, even Central TV’s internal staff and program teams’ supervisors were curious, curious how this cult program could make Zhang Ye claim that he would “someday ascend the highest heights”!

They were also considered industry insiders, but this was their first time coming onto the set of The Voice. They could not grasp what the show would be like, as it hadn’t even started yet, but the impact from the stage layout had clearly made an impression on them. This was truly extravagant beyond measure!

The light setup on the left was worth 220,000!

The machine at the right was worth 110,000!

Then, the large display screen behind the stage and its control equipment started in the millions!

In the whole of Central TV, other than the Spring Festival Gala venue which would need to use tons of money, there weren't any other programs that dared to spend as The Voice did. Further, even if they dared to spend that amount of money, they wouldn't have the budget to do so. Just looking at the stage which was estimated to cost upwards of ten million, those staff members of Central TV all felt that the setup here was far too extravagant! At the same time, they felt very envious! If they could use the equipment and stage over here, how nice would it be!

On stage, Zhang Ye yelled, "All departments, please take note, 5-minute countdown starting now!"

When the audience heard this, they also quieted down very quickly.

Zhang Ye started announcing some routines and procedures to the audience, "Could we trouble everyone to turn off your phones or set them to silent as the recording will begin shortly? Please do not be rowdy or speak loudly. When the contestants are performing and the coaches are speaking, try to maintain silence in the studio. Other than clapping, it would be best not to make any strange sounds, such as whistling or screaming, or else it will affect the recording and we will have to do it over again. As the program will be broadcast tonight, time is of the essence, so let's make the most of the time we have from the start. I hope everyone will cooperate and understand us. Thank you."

The audience obliged and turned off their phones or silenced them.

Zhang Ye turned around and held the microphone, saying, "Lighting, could you turn down the intensity of the lights here at Zone 3. It's flooding to the outside....Please do one last mic check. Good....Are the coaches ready....Good....All departments, get into position. Ready the music....Counting down...3, 2, 1. Action!" When they broadcast the show on television, they would insert a short clip and introduction at the beginning, but for the live recording, they won't be playing them. It began with the opening theme song!

The recording started!

The music played! 1

When the introduction fluttered out, a lot of the audience closed their eyes. They felt it was very enjoyable, the audio quality was outrageously good. The audio effects didn't even need a mention, they were so good!

Jiang Yuan gently nodded.

A few of the Central TV staff were also full of praise. This was the highest-end equipment setup in the country and it was truly worth the money. Even though it was a little expensive, you got what you paid for!

The stage darkened and only a few spots of red light were visible as they lit up the different areas of the studio! Suddenly, a ray of white light lit up and swept from above onto the stage. All the other spotlights seemingly responded to its call and focused onto the stage as well, shining onto a figure of a person as the lights followed!

The first person came out—Chen Guang!

Chen Guang was dressed in a flowery suit, and holding a microphone as he slowly walked out. He started singing, “I wanna fly to the sky and walk side beside the Sun. The world waits for me to change it...”

The second coach was revealed immediately!

Before anyone saw her, her singing had drifted into the studio!

“Never been afraid of others seeing my dreams. Here, I can make it happen!” It was Chen Guang’s wife, Fan Wenli. In all the music industry, that light and ethereal voice was unique to her!

Following that, Zhang Xia appeared. Grandma Zhang’s singing tempo was more inclined towards her bel canto style, but somehow carried a lingering charm to it. It was especially nice to listen to and did not seem out of place when used in a pop song. “Laughing loudly, let’s walk side by side. Isn’t happiness everywhere!”

Finally, it was time for the final coach to make her appearance!

The moment she stepped out, the entire audience stood up and cheered, screaming without end!

Zhang Yuanqi had a very natural and poised smile on her face as she stepped onto the stage. “Casting off all worries, I stride forward bravely. Now I am taking center stage!”

The melody suddenly became more energetic!

The four coaches made eye contact with each other and sang together:

“I believe I’m me, I trust in tomorrow. I believe youth has no limits.”

“Whether sunset at the beach or the crowded streets, it’s the prettiest paradise for me.”

I believe in freedom, I believe in hope. I believe I can reach out and touch the sky. With you by my side, life is more exciting, every moment so wonderful, I do believe!

The audience roared with excitement, some of them waving their hands in rhythm, others screaming!

The four coaches vocal characteristics were all different. Zhang Xia's voice was strong and sincere, Chen Guang had a more booming type of voice, Fan Wenli's voice sounded light and ethereal, while Zhang Yuanqi's voice was mature and had a magnetic charm to it. The four unique tones fused together perfectly and made the theme song sound unparalleled!

"I believe in freedom. I believe in hope!"

"I believe I can reach out and touch the sky!"

"With you by my side, life is more exciting, every moment so wonderful!"

"I do believe!"

It was the perfect stage!

It had the perfect audio setup!

They had the perfect singing voices!

Just an [opening theme song](#) alone had set the entire studio ablaze!

"It's too good!"

“It was sung really well! This is my first time listening to a song performed live! It’s really satisfying!”

“The teachers are no doubt worthy of their statuses as talented singers in the music industry, they’re all really good!”

“It’s important that the song is also good! It’s only my first time hearing this song, but it’s already so nice! ‘I wanna fly to the sky and walk beside the Sun’? What level of boldness is this! Only someone like Zhang Ye could write a song like this!”

“This song is surely going to get popular!”

“Right. I don’t know about the show, but this song is awesome! This opening stage effects were really awesome as well!”

“I’m drunk from listening! This is what you f**king call singing!”

Many in the audience were only noticing for the first time that The Voice indeed had some differences with the other singing talent shows. In terms of the lighting and audio effects, it was already superior to others. Moreover, with these four big shot, talented singers, when a comparison was made, this opening stage had already dominated all the other singing talent shows!

The music had not stopped yet; the outro was playing.

Zhang Ye had already walked up on stage, and above him, a hanging microphone was dropped from the ceiling with the

microphone head facing down. Zhang Ye grabbed it and in one single motion held it upright and announced, “Let’s give a warm welcome to our four coaches as they get seated! The first coach, Zhang Xia!”

Applause thundered!

With the music still playing in the background, Zhang Xia smiled and waved to everyone before walking over to her coach chair.

Zhang Ye announced, “The next coach, Chen Guang!”

Chen Guang was giving a thumbs up on both his hands as he trotted over to his chair.

“Let’s welcome our third coach, Fan Wenli!” Zhang Ye said in a very high-pitched voice. Hosting was a job that required a person to adapt to certain ways and styles to suit the different time and mood of an audience.

Fan Wenli was not so flamboyant and just quietly walked to her chair with a smile on her face.

Zhang Ye said, “And please welcome our final coach, Zhang Yuanqi!”

Old Zhang’s popularity had really gone through the roof. When she was introduced, the already loud applause from the audience raised another notch and the decibel level increased several times

more. There were even screams from the audience!

Relaxed, Zhang Yuanqi smiled as she walked and blew some kisses their way. In front of others, Old Zhang looked much more approachable.

Chapter 667 – What Sort Of A Tongue Do You Have!

After the first segment ended.

The four coaches had all taken their seats.

Right now, other than the lights, there was only Zhang Ye left on stage. As he was the program's executive director and host, if there were any conflicts or incidents during the recording, they would be handled by Assistant Directors Zhang Zuo and Ha Qiqi, although Zhang Ye had already specifically instructed them on what to do. Numerous scenarios had already been thought of and run through with them. So Zhang Ye being onstage and hosting did not have too many worries that there would be any problems occurring. Besides, this was not a live broadcast. At most they would just do a reshoot. But they would still have to avoid that because they needed to allocate some time to do the post-production and captioning work so that they could meet tonight's broadcast time of 9 PM. Time was of the essence, therefore, if they could finish the recording with a single run, it would be most ideal.

The music stopped.

Next up was the segment in which Zhang Ye would be reciting his lines as the host.

Jiang Yuan looked to the stage.

Wu Mo was looking at Zhang Ye.

The audience all kept their eyes peeled on the stage.

The four coaches and program team's staff also had their full attention on Zhang Ye.

If it was said the program team had expected the just played opening theme song to be performed like it was, due to them having rehearsed it before, then starting from here on out, none of them had an idea of where the direction of the show would be headed. They knew the general direction and rundown of the program, but as for how the recording would turn out, they were all in the dark. Zhang Ye did not speak his lines in front of anyone beforehand, the coaches also hadn't seen any of the contestants before, while the contestants and their families backstage as well didn't quite know the rules of the show. For all these days, they had only been practicing and rehearsing, to say nothing of the audience and the other departments of Central TV, even their internal program team's staff were unclear of many details about the show.

And so, all of the attention in the studio was now fully on Zhang Ye, because he was the only person who knew everything about this show like the back of his hand as well as the one who controlled the entire development of it. Whether it was the audience or the program team, everyone was eager to know what Zhang Ye could make of this show that no one was optimistic about!

Another person who was looking forward to the outcome was

Zhang Ye himself!

Standing in the center of the stage, he was in fact the most excited person in the entire studio. He looked below the stage, glancing at the lights under his feet and then looked to the side where a hand making a victory sign was holding the logo of The Voice of China. All of these looked vastly familiar to him. Zhang Ye had really taken the entire stage of The Voice from his previous world and recreated it in this world to a similarity of 90%!

He thought back to his previous world, when he was still watching The Voice with his parents in front of their TV. At that time, he was just a normal student who harbored dreams of becoming a star like any other similarly aged kids. But today, he was standing on this same stage, albeit in a different world, and had become the host who was getting all the attention and taking center stage. Destiny was really something that no one could predict at all!

Momentarily sighing, Zhang Ye quickly gathered all his thoughts and put them away. It was time to begin. This was just his debut show on Central TV, but he already had this ultimate trump card called The Voice in his hand. In such a situation, if he could still screw up the show, then he should just find a thick wall and crash into it to end his life!

“Hello, everyone.” Zhang Ye held the microphone and spoke into it, “I am your host, Zhang Ye.”

The audience suddenly broke out into applause that was as loud as what they gave to the four coaches.

Zhang Ye smiled at the camera and said to the audience, “Welcome to the global premiere of the country’s most professionally organized mega-scale singing talent show, brought to you exclusively by health product leader Brain Gold!”

Mega-scale?

The most professionally organized in the country?

Global premiere?

Hearing the usage of those descriptions, everyone in the audience was shocked!

In the current era of variety shows, at most they would claim that the show was brought to you by a professional team, that it was powerfully debuting or powerfully broadcasted live from a location. Never had anyone claimed that it was a global premiere or something like that. However, if those words were scrutinized carefully, there was nothing wrong with it either. It was indeed globally premiering on Central TV Department 1’s channel, so there was nothing to nitpick, though it could be labeled as a little bit of wordplay. “Powerful Debut” versus “Global Premiere,” the difference was obvious just by listening to those words. A global premiere was on a much higher level!

The several leaders of Central TV Department 1 all looked at each other.

The eyes of the other Central TV program teams' supervisors and their staff also lit up at these words. They nearly clapped in admiration. This Zhang Ye might always look like a troublemaker, but there was nothing anyone could criticize about his ideas. What a stroke of genius! Using the words "Global Premiere" was a really great idea. This had to be noted down for future programs!

Wu Mo also nodded very agreeably as he whispered to his upper management beside him. He really liked the phrase "by health product leader Brain Gold." It was really well said!

What they didn't know was that the phrases "global premiere," "product leader," and whatnot were all overused terms in Zhang Ye's previous world. It's just that no one in this world had started using them yet, that was all!

Zhang Ye continued, "As a good singer, the most important thing is your voice. Regardless of looks, age, or occupation, everything will be judged based only on your voice alone. The four coaches will use all their experience to help you, to find your true voice in the spirit of true music. Our stage of The Voice is looking forward to your arrival." He pointed at the camera lens with his finger, "You just might be China's next generation of great singers!"

Applause rang again!

Little Wang was below stage, acting as the applause leader. When she gave the signal, the audience cooperated very well.

Zhang Ye held the microphone, smiling. “Today, we have eight people who will be joining us onstage. Who could they be? What kinds of voices will they have? What songs will they choose to perform?”

Many of the audience members sat up straight, waiting in anticipation. Yes, just who would these people be? How well would they sing?

Zhang Ye laughed a little and said, “Alright, next up is the segment that is the most, most anticipated.” Then he paused for a moment. “—Advertisements!”

When that was said, everyone collectively fainted!

“Pfft!”

“How did it turn out to be advertisements!”

“Hey, what ‘most, most anticipated’!”

“That’s so funny, that Teacher Zhang!”

“He really catches you off guard with what he says! I thought that there was going to be a contestant appearing already!”

“Who would anticipate advertisements!”

In The Voice from Zhang Ye's previous world, the host did not add such flowery language in his opening announcements and focused more on the contestants and coaches. However, since Zhang Ye was the executive director of the program now, he could easily make the necessary adjustments to his role as the host. He had spent so much effort to remake The Voice here, so did anyone really think that he would just sit back and quietly take on the duty of doing announcements? How's that possible!

When they heard the word "advertisements," Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others stared with their eyes wide open. They looked very concerned, because Zhang Ye had previously said some weird things to them that left them very confused. From the sound of it, Director Zhang meant that he had some tricks hidden in his lines to be delivered? From what they could see on the host's script, the first half of it was already said. Only the latter half which was a string of advertisement messages was left. After that, they would move on to the recording of the main event on the stage where there wouldn't be any more lines from the host!

Some people in the audience were already yawning.

Advertisements?

Whether they appeared in a movie, TV drama series, or other programs, these were the segments viewers hated the most. Advertisements were not something people were interested in looking at, so of course less was better.

Some people were whispering in the audience.

“Say it quickly.”

“Yeah, say it and be done. We’re waiting to see who the contestants are.”

No one took this to be of any importance, including Wu Mo and Jiang Yuan.

The coaches were also whispering and conversing among themselves already, talking about their expectations of the type of contestants they liked.

Previously, someone online had made an observation. For such singing talent shows, the host was basically the most non-existent part of the program. All they needed to do was announce the next segments and deliver some advertising messages, so anyone could do what Zhang Ye was doing. This was the consensus many people in the studio had as well, so they ended up hoping to focus more on the contestants and did not pay any attention to Zhang Ye’s lines as the host.

He saw the audience looking incredibly listless, yet his was a face of calm. He suddenly took a deep breath that lasted a good two seconds, like he was filling his lungs fully with air!

Some in the audience were tickled by this scene. What’s he doing?

Chen Guang was at a bit speechless. Are you powering up into your final form?

Ha Qiqi was also quite confused. What's the deep breath for?

Nobody understood what was going on, but immediately in the next second, when Zhang Ye opened his mouth, everyone looked as though their tails had been stepped on and became so shocked their gallbladders nearly fell out!

Zhang Ye [spewed](#), “I-will-not-accept-any-gifts-this-year The-only-gift-I-will-accept-is-Brain Gold There's-no-need-to-watch-any-TV-shows-this-year The-only-TV-show-you-need-to-watch-is-The Voice The-authentic-health-product The-authentic-The Voice Welcome-to-the-broadcast-of-The Voice of China-brought-to-you-exclusively-by-our-title-sponsor-leader-in-health-products-Brain Gold Drink-Mount Zhou Mineral Water-to-show-your-support-for-The Voice The-most-favored-student-of-the-four-coaches-for-this-season-of-The Voice-will-get-a-chance-to-join-Mount Zhou Mineral Water's Music Dreams Tour Text-to-support-your-favorite-singers-and-you'll-get-a-50-yuan-book-voucher-from-EveryRead.net We-thank-EveryRead.net-for-their-generous-support-of-our-singers-of-The Voice For-any-of-our-contestants-as-long-as-they-get-acknowledged-by-at-least-three-coaches-they'll-win-a-10,000-yuan-Music Dreams Scholarship Sponsored-by-Brain Gold. We-also-give-our-thanks-to-Beijing Dahua Hotel-for-sponsoring-the-accommodations-for-the coaches-of-The Voice of China!”

A flurry of words!

A single breath!

200 words!

When this advertising message finished, the entire recording studio was as silent as the dead of night!

Chen Guang was so shocked that his jaw almost fell off!

Fan Wenli stared with eyes wide, showing a shocked expression as well!

Wu Mo's body had already slanted to the side so far that he nearly fell off his chair!

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others also very nearly burst their blood vessels!

The audience was all dumbfounded!

The coaches were dumbfounded!

The program team staff were also dumbfounded!

One of the audience members even jumped out of his seat in shock. It was as though he had seen a ghost from the way he was staring at the onstage Zhang Ye!

For a few seconds, the entire studio was enveloped in silence. Everyone in the venue had no clue on what to do, having been scared silly by Zhang Ye's glib delivery of the lines!

Not until after a long time did the audience suddenly burst out exclaiming and screaming!

“Heavens!”

“Oh my god!”

“What did I just hear?”

“F**k me! What sort of a tongue do you have!”

“How could an advertisement even be done in this way? An advertising message could even be recited in such a way!”

“Zhang Ye, you've won! I throw myself on the ground and submit to you! That mouth of yours is too damn crazy! Is that even a human being's mouth? Is that even a human being's tongue that you have??”

Chapter 668 – The Irreplaceable Host!

The audience was going wild!

But Zhang Ye was cool as a cucumber, not looking like he had done something worth mentioning. He did not have that unnatural smug look that some newbie hosts had after completing some difficult lines or a strong sense of showing off. Having been in the industry for some time now, he had already considered himself a veteran. Although he still hadn't been working too long yet, he already had a lot of experience and his control of the stage was getting stronger and stronger. When he moved about onstage, he was very natural at it, and as a host, he definitely had to have that air of confidence about him. How would he be qualified to host any programs at a place such as Central TV Department 1 otherwise?

Offstage, it was getting rather disorderly.

Zhang Ye called for a cut, "Please stop recording for a while."

The staff members operating the cameras all looked at him.

With quick paces, Zhang Ye walked over to the nearest camera. "Show me the playback." As he said that, he put in the earpiece.

The cameraman quickly came back to his senses and switched to playback mode to show him the recorded footage.

Zhang Ye first confirmed whether his lines were delivered

without any errors or not as he had said it so quickly that even his mind could not keep up with what he had said. He was relieved when he saw that he did rather well, without slurring or delivering the lines incorrectly. This long sequence of advertising messages was very well enunciated and every word could be heard clearly. Overall, it was delivered quite ideally.

How did Zhang Ye manage to say it in such a fast manner?

Why was he able to achieve such a speed?

Of course, it was due to the more than 100 Fruits of Agility he had eaten!

Before, Zhang Ye had gradually received more than 100 Fruits of Agility from the game ring's system. This item helped to increase one's agility and reaction speed. At the beginning, Zhang Ye felt that it was an useless item and that he had wasted his reputation points on it. But when the idea of The Voice appeared in his head, he had a spark of genius and found a practical use for those Fruits of Agility. In the original version of The Voice of China in his previous world, it was exactly what its host, Hua Shao, did!

If it had been the past, Zhang Ye could never have matched up to Hua Shao's rapidfire speaking. Although Zhang Ye was trained in broadcasting, it wasn't that he didn't work hard at it but that it was more of a talent thing that couldn't be trained. Zhang Ye's reaction speed could only be so fast, even if his speech was faster than most normal people due to the fact that he had had training in school. But there was still a limit to it. He couldn't reach Hua Shao's reciting speed no matter what. If anyone actually insisted

on Zhang Ye speaking that fast, he could probably do it. Just that with speed, he would lose the capability of enunciating words clearly. He would surely slur at some point which would mean that it would be useless in this situation. This was a stage where he needed to speak fast and clear at the same time, so that everyone could hear each and every word clearly. Otherwise, all of this would be pointless!

As such, the Fruit of Agility had really helped him a great deal. It allowed Zhang Ye's reaction speed to be raised manyfold in a short time. Not only could he match up to Hua Shao's reading speed now, he was even a little bit faster than him, possibly nearing the limits of humanity!

Ha Qiqi came over. "Director Zhang."

The cameraman asked, "Can this recording be used?"

Zhang Ye finished viewing it and gave a helpless sigh. He said, "I wonder."

Ha Qiqi exclaimed, "It can't be used? Which word did you get wrong?"

"It's not that, but the atmosphere of the audience was too unnatural." Zhang Ye looked at the four coaches. "Coaches, may I suggest that you all don't look so shocked? The cameras that focus on you guys and me are all synchronized, so your expressions will be shown as well." Then he turned around to face the audience and said, "And everyone, it was too quiet just now. The silence felt

really strange, so could I trouble all of you to be more relaxed and look more natural? You can also clap or cheer, just don't stare with your eyes wide while saying nothing. Otherwise, the entire studio's atmosphere will seem nonexistent and feel really strange."

Chen Guang said in a speechless manner, "Who asked you to speak that fast and scare me!"

Zhang Xia smiled wryly and added, "I couldn't react at all either."

Zhang Yuanqi looked at him. "Did you eat a bunch of bullets for lunch?"

Fan Wenli could only react with silence to express her frame of mind.

Faced with Zhang Ye's dissatisfaction with the recording, none the audience members knew how to react. You're still unsatisfied? You still blame us for being too quiet? Your sister! That speed at which you recited your lines was leaving afterimages of the words! What else could we do but stay quiet! That advertising message of yours was simply too shocking!

Zhang Zuo ran up. "Director Zhang, are we going to record it again?"

Ha Qiqi suggested, "These advertising lines are really too good. It's like a crowning touch. I've worked in TV programming for

many years, but this is the first time I've heard an advertising message being delivered in such a way. If it gets deleted, it would be such a pity. We might not get such a good recording if we do it again. That's a huge amount of words you need to say in a single breath. It's too difficult. Actually, we can just re-record the individual shots of the coaches and the audience separately, then add them together in post by layering the audio together. That would give people the feeling that it was all recorded at the same time."

Zhang Ye had not learned directing before, so he wasn't exactly a professional in this area. But he still understood in general what she meant, though he was not prepared to do it that way. He still preferred to make it more realistic. If they added the separate shots together and did it perfectly, the effect would definitely still be largely discounted.

But before he could say anything and before the program team had decided how to handle it, someone in the audience shouted.

"Record it again!"

"Teacher Zhang, do it once more!"

"Yeah, do it again!"

With someone leading, the others followed in response!

Hearing that, Jiang Yuan and many of those belonging to the

program teams of Central TV were stunned. Do it again? They'd heard of crosstalk actors doing an encore for their segments and singers doing encores for their songs, but in all the time they'd been in the industry, they'd never goddamn heard an audience requesting an encore for advertisements! Just how bored are you all! These are advertisements we're talking about!

However, that was just how it was!

This would be something no one would believe if they heard of it. But at this moment, at this studio, countless audience members were strongly asking for an encore by Zhang Ye, to recite his advertisement lines once again!

Zhang Ye smiled at this and thought for a while before saying, "Then let's just record it again."

Ha Qiqi and the others got off from the stage and went back to their positions.

"All teams, take note. 3, 2, 1, action..." Zhang Ye stood back at the same spot and took a deep breath again like before. After a slight pause, he suddenly said his lines again, "I-will-not-accept-any-gifts-this-year The-only-gift-I-will-accept-is-Brain Gold There's-no-need-to-watch-any-TV-shows-this-year The-only-TV-show-you-need-to-watch-is-The Voice The-authentic-health-product The-authentic-The Voice Welcome-to-the-broadcast-of-The Voice of China-brought-to-you-exclusively-by-our-title-sponsor-leader-in-health-products-Brain Gold Drink-Mount Zhou Mineral Water-to-show-your-support-for-The Voice The-most-favored-student-of-the-four-coaches-for-this-season-of-The Voice-will-get-a-chance-

to-join-Mount Zhou Mineral Water's Music Dreams Tour Text-to-support-your-favorite-singers-and-you'll-get-a-50-yuan-book-voucher-from-EveryRead.net We-thank-EveryRead.net-for-their-generous-support-of-our-singers-of-The Voice For-any-of-our-contestants-as-long-as-they-get-acknowledged-by-at-least-three-coaches-they'll-win-a-10,000-yuan-Music Dreams Scholarship Sponsored-by-Brain Gold. We-also-give-our-thanks-to-Beijing Dahua Hotel-for-sponsoring-the-accommodations-for-the coaches-of-The Voice of China!"

Exclaiming once again filled the studio!

The cheering did not stop!

"Good one!"

"Awesome!"

"I'm kneeling! Fully and totally kneeling!"

The audience was already prepared for it, but when they heard Zhang Ye's shocking advertising message once more, they couldn't help but applaud and call it good. They were all very excited, just like how people would feel when they were watching a circus act!

They were the same lines of the advertising message!

It was still done in a single breath!

The words were still clearly enunciated!

It was still delivered at the same galeforce speed, or maybe it was a misconception, but they all somehow felt that Zhang Ye had finished reciting the lines even faster than before!

Initially, Ha Qiqi did not recommend recording again, afraid that the second time would not be as good as the first. After all, that kind of reciting speed had already surpassed the limits and was unheard of, but who could have expected that Zhang Ye's professionalism had already exceeded the realms of a normal person's understanding? Reciting it for the second time, not only did Zhang Ye repeat his feat from before and not leave out a single word, he even went faster than the first!

Backstage, some of the program team staff were looking at clocks. In the audience, there were also a few curious members who started their timers when Zhang Ye opened his mouth!

In the end, the clocked time shocked everyone!

The first time it was recited, there wasn't proper timing so no one knew how long it took. It felt like it was 18 seconds or maybe 20 seconds, but this time, the time was precisely measured—it only took 14.7 seconds! The advertising slogan consisted of around 200 words, so it meant that Zhang Ye had spoken over a dozen words in just one second!

Crazy!

This was really crazy!

If your mouth could fire bullets and you were left there speaking for an hour, then all of Beijing's citizens would have perished!

Jiang Yuan: "..."

Chen Guang: "..."

Fan Wenli: "..."

All of them were again expressing their innermost thoughts with speechlessness!

Zhang Ye went over to the camera to watch the replay again. This time, it was better, so he nodded and said, "OK, that passed."

But as it happened, the audience started calling out again!

"Another time!"

"Yeah, do it once more!"

"Demonstrate again, Teacher Zhang!"

The audience's cheering amused Zhang Ye. "Did you all get a kick out of listening to that? Just reciting that twice has made my tongue feel very sore. There won't be any more encores!"

Ha Qiqi laughed.

Little Wang also covered her mouth and giggled.

The staff of the other program teams of Central TV all looked at each other and couldn't help but think of how comparison always ended up torturing people. Like on their own programs, when had the audience ever been so passionate like today? Even if they were recording a slightly more interesting segment like the bantering between the guest celebrities, the audience did not want to watch it a second time. Sometimes, when they had to do another recording of those segments, the audience would end up looking listless and couldn't be bothered with watching anymore. When that happened, the program team would have no choice but to edit the previously recorded audience's cheering into the re-recorded scenes in post-production! But for Zhang Ye's program? Just reciting an advertising message was enough to provoke the audience into asking for an encore? And doing it once was not enough so they had to ask for a second encore??

Wu Mo and the Brain Gold company's people were the happiest people in the studio. They couldn't have possibly predicted that a dry advertisement message segment that no one looked forward to could have become marvelous because of Zhang Ye's reciting. It had created a totally new style of advertising message and brought it to new heights!

Although with the increased speed of the advertising message, their advertisement airtime had also decreased a lot, probably down by around 20% of the originally planned advertisement time, but because of the 100 million title sponsorship fee, Zhang Ye also took care to mention Brain Gold's name multiple times. It was mentioned not only in the place of the title sponsor lines, but was also brought up in the lower tiered advertising rights portion. This was the special care that Zhang Ye had given to them. It didn't matter much since they had only managed to sign two advertisers for the lower advertising rights tier anyway, so he simply gave Brain Gold an additional mention. Moreover, with the continued mention of their product and with Zhang Ye's charming new style of reciting the advertising message, if paired with the chance that it would be imitated by people and would generate heated discussions about it, then the effects of the advertising that the Brain Gold company would get will definitely outperform traditional advertising methods by manyfold!

Wu Mo finally understood why Zhang Ye would ask for a title sponsorship fee of 100 million back when they had the meeting. Even if The Voice did not end up with high viewership ratings, just this style of reciting the advertising message was worth the 100 million title sponsorship! Besides, who said that The Voice's viewership ratings definitely wouldn't be high? Just this opening alone was enough to give everyone surprise after surprise!

Some of the audience's expressions were already different!

They'd realized that The Voice they were watching now was a totally different affair from the online analysis of The Voice that all the experts and industry insiders had done!

Just regarding the segment of the host alone!

It was reported online that a host was only a supporting role in a talent show?

The experts also claimed that anyone could replace Zhang Ye as the host for such talent shows?

What supporting role!

It was clear as f**k that this was a lead role!

Anyone could do it? Why don't you all appoint one and show us!

Just with the godly talking speed of Teacher Zhang, even if you found three hosts and let them do part of the advertising message each, they couldn't f**king recite it that fast! !

Who could replace him!

At least on the stage of The Voice, the position of the host was irreplaceable!

Even if you scoured all over the country, only Zhang Ye would have the ability to do this!

Chapter 669 – A Four-Chair Turn!

The atmosphere in the studio was fervent.

An advertising message had brought the excitement of the audience to a high!

“That mouth of his, it’s ridiculous!”

“Zhang Ye has always walked off the beaten path!”

“I’m increasingly looking forward to the competition segment coming up.”

“Me too, this opening was really awesome. The stage, the lights, the coaches, the opening theme and even the advertising message. It looks like it has taken a lead several years ahead of other similar shows. If the opening was already this stunning, then how bad could the competition round be? Even if there aren’t any highlights in the competition round, even if it’s the same as those other similar programs, The Voice’s viewership ratings won’t be too bad!”

“We were really lucky to get tickets to come watch this live!”

“It’s still difficult to make any judgment on anything yet.”

“Yeah, let’s keep watching and see.”

“The Voice’s Achilles heel lies in its quality of contestants. They neither care about looks nor occupation, so the contestants might all turn out to be your everyday people, which can also be referred to as karaoke experts. Their level of professionalism will surely be lower since they wouldn’t have learned about music before. Even if they can sing well, they wouldn’t be comparable to those music students or musicians. In the other similar types of talent shows, the contestants are basically all made up of good-looking people or artists; there’s a great deal of professionalism in them. The Voice’s contestants are definitely disadvantaged in this area and that is definitely going to be the Achilles heel of the program.”

“I worry about that too.”

“Yeah, how can amateurs even compare to professionals? Not to mention that they won’t have the advantage in looks either.”

“It’s starting, it’s starting!”

The audience was whispering when they saw Zhang Ye picking up the microphone again and so they focused on him.

Zhang Ye did not beat around the bush and just said loudly, “Next up, we’ll be handing the stage over to them, so let’s welcome our first contestant on stage! And would the four coaches please turn your chairs around.”

The four chairs moved at the same time, turning around slowly.

Fan Wenli felt that this was a very refreshing new experience, so she turned to Zhang Yuanqi beside her and spoke about it softly.

When the audience saw that, many of them were shocked!

“What’s the meaning of that?”

“What are they doing?”

“Why did they turn the chairs around? They won’t be able to see anyone then!”

“Yeah, what kind of an approach is that?”

“Didn’t you all see the promo video of The Voice? It’s already introduced the rules. The coaches will only listen to the voice without seeing the contestant. That’s the main point of the program which has been heavily emphasized.”

“Ah?”

“Didn’t the coaches already meet the contestants earlier?”

“I heard they did not. When Grandma Zhang Xia was interviewed the other day to promote of The Voice, she was grumbling about this matter. She said that Executive Director Zhang Ye didn’t even reveal anything about any contestants to them beforehand. It was

all kept secret, so all four coaches haven't seen even a shadow of the contestants yet."

"Then it must be true. Grandma Zhang Xia would never lie."

"Whoa, they're playing it with such high risks?"

"That seems rather interesting. Revolving chairs? It sounds really refreshing!"

"They've got my attention again. This setup seems to be really interesting, but I wonder how practical it will be."

Zhang Ye left the stage.

Little Wang immediately broke open the cap of a mineral water bottle and handed it over to Zhang Ye. She said, "Director Zhang, you've worked hard!"

Another female editor who was beside them also said, "You've worked hard, Director Zhang."

Zhang Ye chugged half a bottle of water immediately. Those two advertising messages might have seemed easy to him initially, but when he recited them, they really strained his vocal chords. He said, "You guys keep watch over here, I have to get to the second recording studio." He put down the mineral water and quickly headed backstage to the second recording studio. Actually, this was just the contestants' resting and waiting area backstage. There

were a few individual rooms on one side where the live signal of the recording would be telecast over. The performing contestant's family would be stationed in the second recording studio while Zhang Ye, as the host, would also have some recording tasks to handle over here. He would be watching together with the contestant's family members.

Three minutes passed.

After the stage was rearranged simply, the lights shut off. This signaled that the competition round was about to begin. When watching this on the televised broadcast, after Zhang Ye called for everyone to welcome the first contestant, the contestant would have already taken the microphone and slowly walked up on stage. But as this was the live recording, the change wouldn't be that immediate since they needed to make preparations.

Pa ta.

Pa ta.

The lights were being turned off, extinguishing one by one.

Assistant Director Zhang Zuo's voice boomed in the studio, "Get ready! Counting down. In 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, cameras on. First contestant, please proceed onto the stage!"

At the backstage entrance.

Luo Yu's legs were trembling as she clutched her chest, breathing nervously. She felt like her body was extremely rigid at this moment.

Ha Qiqi urged, "Teacher Luo, go on."

Luo Yu said with her legs turning to jelly, "Why don't we get someone else to go up first. I still need to warm up a little more!"

Ha Qiqi nearly fainted. She said, "Director Zhang has clearly fingered you as the first to start. He said that the opening contestant of The Voice was you to begin with and was fully trusting of you."

"But there's too many people out there and also the four coaches..." Luo Yu was usually a very brave person, even daring to sing while standing in a big field. When she went for the Central TV preliminary auditions, she also performed quite well and was very calm. However, that was only because there weren't many people around. But now? Past the stage there were more than a hundred audience members sitting there, and also those big-time celebrities like Zhang Yuanqi and Fan Wenli whom she had only ever read about on the newspapers. There were even cameras that would record everything and broadcast it all over the country. Central TV Department 1 had a coverage of 1 billion people all over the country, thus, just before going on stage, Luo Yu felt very terrified for once.

Ha Qiqi persuaded, "You have to go up on stage whether you're the first or the last. Just clench your teeth and go up, it's no big deal."

Luo Yu was already sweating profusely.

Sensing that something was wrong, Wu Yi also came over. “Little Luo, hurry up, it’s all on you!”

Luo Yu asked, “Do you guys think I can make it? What if I screw up? Then...”

Ha Qiqi said, “Director Zhang’s foresight is very good. I’m sure you know that as well, don’t you? If he says you can make it, then you’ll definitely be fine! Otherwise, why would Director Zhang arrange for you to be the first to go on stage? Just sing like you normally do, don’t hold back and don’t think of anything else!”

Luo Yu took another deep breath and clenched her teeth. “OK! I’m going to give it my all!”

“That’s right!” Ha Qiqi pushed her from behind. “Go on! We’re all going to be listening to what you’ve got!”

Luo Yu picked up the microphone and clenched her fist. She walked towards the stage with large strides with the wind blowing behind her. Then she stepped up to the center of the stage where the spotlight was focused and stood still!

The four coaches’ chairs were all facing away from her. She could not see anyone. All she saw were the names on the backs of the chairs. As the light on stage was too glaring, the house where the

audience was seated also appeared to be very dark. Now that Luo Yu couldn't see anything at all, she became much calmer and thumped her chest. She was going to give it her all!

After Luo Yu had gone onto the stage, Wu Yi asked, "Will Little Luo really be alright?"

Ha Qiqi replied, "How would I know?"

Wu Yi said, "I'm just worried that the audience won't be able to accept that voice of hers."

Ha Qiqi said worried, "It's not even a confirmed thing that the four coaches can accept her style of singing. If it were up to me, I would have gotten the coaches' input when we were doing the filtering out of the contestants. What if Director Zhang feels that they are OK, but the audience and the coaches do not think so? If the coaches do not turn around continuously for a few contestants in a row, our program will be finished!"

Only a moment ago, these two people were encouraging Luo Yu and cheering her on, telling her that she could definitely do it and that they were extremely confident in her. But realistically, these two did not even know what to expect!

The moment Luo Yu went up on stage, the audience perfunctorily applauded but stopped very quickly. Seeing this contestant, the audience were all feeling speechless.

“Indeed, they did not care about the looks!”

“Goddammit, she’s so fat?”

“At the beginning, I still thought that the idea of only judging the voice was a gimmick. Who knew that they really did not care about looks at all? That person looks too normal!”

“Such a fat woman, will she be able to sing well?”

“The image is so beautiful that I’m scared to watch!”

The audience was still in anticipation just a while ago, but when they saw the first contestant, their hearts turned cold and their passionate emotions, too, settled down by a lot. It wasn’t that they were judging someone based on their looks, but that all along in any singing talent show they had always been used to seeing good-looking contestants. But now, unexpectedly, such a bad-looking and fat contestant had appeared before them; they couldn’t get used to it! This was not something they’d experienced before!

The four coaches were facing the audience, so they naturally also took in the expressions on their faces.

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, “Doesn’t look too good, does it?”

“I don’t know.” Chen Guang blinked several times.

Fan Wenli also deduced from the reaction of the audience that the first contestant was likely not too good.

But right at this moment that was difficult to understand, Luo Yu turned around and nodded her head, signaling that she was ready. Then at the same time a fervent piece of music played onstage.

Drums!

Guitar!

Bass!

Just from the melody alone, everyone knew it was going to be a rock song!

When the audience heard that, they were a little stunned. What was the meaning of this? This fat woman was going to perform a rock song? Everyone knew that rock songs were mainly performed by male singers as they required a kind of attitude and strength a woman sometimes lacked. Most of the time, they would only be able to perform in style but not in spirit! Yet here she was, going to perform a rock song? How bold!

Jiang Yuan looked at the stage with suspicion.

Ha Qiqi and Wu Yi looked like they were even more nervous than Luo Yu, staring at her without batting an eyelid.

The other program team staff members also knew about Luo Yu's name. On the first day of the preliminary auditions, they had already given nicknames to the contestants. Luo Yu was one of the members of the four "wonders," and as the preliminary auditions progressed, the number of "wonders" who joined them also increased. From the start, it was the four "wonders" which later increased into the eight "wonders." The program staff team did not know what to expect. They weren't sure if everyone could accept this sort of odd voice. Little Wang even kept her eyes closed as she was too afraid to watch.

What if she turned out to be a dud?

What if none of the coaches turned around?

Everyone in the program team had such lingering thoughts which wouldn't go away!

However, the music entered into a rhythm. Now that it had reached this stage, there was no point in thinking anymore. All they could do was pray, pray that Director Zhang was right!

When the guitar part of the intro was ending, Luo Yu suddenly opened her eyes!

After she drew in a deep breath, Luo Yu's raspy, high-pitched voice burst out. Without preparation or progressive increase, her opening was sung in an alto voice!

“Who told you I don’t understand lyrics, composing, or singing!

“Who told you I don’t understand comfort, laughter, or living!

“Who told you I don’t understand passion, women, or romance!

“Who told you I don’t understand restraint, flexibility, or smarts!”

When her singing started, the entire studio was filled with Luo Yu’s sharp and raspy voice. There was no smoothness, no elegance, and no low rumble to her voice. There was only power!

The power that was in a voice!

It was also the power of expressing her emotions!

The entire audience was shocked!

“This...”

“Holy shit!”

“What kind of a voice is that!”

“That voice, that power!”

“Oh my god, I’m breaking out in goosebumps!”

The four coaches’ eyes also glittered with astonishment. From the beginning until now, they had not had any contact with any contestants. With their backs to the stage, they were also looking forward to seeing the person behind the voice and had a preconceived idea of what a good voice should be like. But none of them expected the first contestant’s voice to be like that! It was too special! They had hardly ever heard a woman who could sing “Who Told You I Don’t Understand” in such a manner! This song was originally performed by a male singer, but after all this while, the raspy female voice was even more powerful sounding when performing it?

Luo Yu was already in the groove as her voice became more and more stable, sounding richer and richer.

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand pain, hurt, or blues!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand anger, glares, or cruelty!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand friendship, brotherhood, or family!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand dreams, ambition, or glory!”

Singing until here, a surprising turn of events took place!

Chen Guang could no longer just sit still. He raised up his hand excitedly and slammed it down on the red button without hesitation. Shua! The coach chair swung around!

The audience cheered in surprise!

“He turned around!”

“Ah!”

“He turned, he turned!”

“This song is nice to listen to! It sounds beautiful!”

When Chen Guang saw Luo Yu on stage, he nodded firmly and raised his hand above his head, giving a thumbs up. He had an expression that did not look calm at all!

Zhang Yuanqi narrowed her eyes but did not move.

Fan Wenli looked over at Chen Guang, clenching her hand and loosening it again like she had some hesitations.

Zhang Xia closed her eyes and listened to the singing seriously,

but did not move either.

Suddenly, Luo Yu reached the chorus. With the microphone in her hands, she stopped for a moment and then belted out the chorus:

“Who told you I can’t sing!”

After this line was sung, Fan Wenli no longer held back. She hit the red button!

A second coach had turned!

Immediately after that, as if at the same time as Fan Wenli, Zhang Xia suddenly opened her eyes she had kept tightly shut, and pressed the red button with determination, though not as quickly and hard as the others.

A third coach had turned around!

“Who told you I don’t understand living!

“Who told you I don’t understand romance!

“Who told you I’m not smart!

“Who told you I don’t know the blues!

“Who told you I can’t be cruel!

“Who told you I don’t understand family!

“Who told you I don’t know glory!”

At this moment, Zhang Yuanqi who was the only coach not to have turned around, smiled and said, “It’s you!” Pa! The chair swung around and faced the stage!

The audience was clapping nonstop!

Beside the stage.

Several of the program team’s staff were screaming like they had gone crazy!

“Quick, look!”

“Little Wang! Quickly take a look!”

Little Wang was still covering her eyes, too afraid to look. “Tell me first, did any of the coaches turn around?”

Next to her, Sister Liu answered, “They did turn!”

Little Wang asked, “Ah? Really? How many of them turned?”

Sister Liu said excitedly, “All of them! The four coaches all turned around!”

Hearing that, Little Wang immediately opened her eyes in shock! They’d turned! They’d really all turned!

Chapter 670 – The Tears Of Luo Yu's Parents!

Two minutes earlier.

In the second recording studio.

Luo Yu's parents were here as well. Before their daughter went up on stage, the two of them repeatedly asked Zhang Ye some questions. They didn't seem to be in high spirits regarding her appearance on television. Instead they felt surprised and puzzled simultaneously without much excitement.

Her father said, "Teacher Zhang, my daughter has never known how to sing well."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Is that so?"

Her mother answered, "She has liked singing ever since she was young, singing by day, singing while eating, and sometimes even hiding under her blanket and singing at night. She sang quite well when she was younger, but after going through puberty, her voice was damaged and her voice turned raspy. Her teachers and classmates even commented that it was better if she did not talk. Once she did, she sounded just like a boy. With this voice, don't mention singing, just hearing it is enough for anyone to find it a nuisance."

Zhang Ye asked, "Your family does not support her music

endeavors?”

Her father sighed, “We also wish to support our child and let her fulfill her dreams. But the problem is that she can’t sing, she’s not suited for this at all.”

Her mother said, “This child has a loud voice. Every time she starts singing at home, my husband and I will always go out for a stroll, otherwise we’ll get annoyed. The neighbors also have a very negative opinion of her and sometimes even come over to our house to ask Luo Yu to lower her volume. We’ve already told her many times that she is causing a disturbance to the others and tried talking to her, but she doesn’t listen. No matter how others talk about her or criticize her, she will still sing every day without caring what others say to her. Now that she has been invited to this competition called The Voice of China, when I heard it from her, I still thought it to be a scam. With her lousy voice, how could it be called a good voice?!”

Zhang Ye said, “Your daughter is up on stage now. Let’s see what the coaches think of her.”

Her mother remarked, “They definitely won’t turn around, right?”

Her father shook his head and did not say anything. The two of them didn’t intend to come here today as they knew that their daughter couldn’t sing, yet she was invited to participate in a singing talent show. Subconsciously, they felt that this did not make any sense and felt that their daughter would definitely be looked down upon by the coaches after performing and be mocked

by the audience. When that happened, it would look bad for them too. However, they still agreed to come here because of Zhang Ye. They could not refuse Zhang Ye after he had personally made several calls to invite them over.

On the television screen, they could see everything that was happening in the main recording studio.

As her parents, when Luo Yu went up on stage looking very nervous, they knew straight away that she would not make it past the coaches.

The next moment, they saw their daughter with her eyes closed and holding the microphone tightly.

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand lyrics, composing, or singing!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand comfort, laughter, or living!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand passion, women, or romance!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand restraint, flexibility, or smarts!”

This song...

These lyrics...

Suddenly, Luo Yu's parents were shocked as they involuntarily thought of the past!

Their neighbor Grandma Liu would grumble in front of them every day, "Don't let your Little Luo sing anymore. There are so many people who can't get famous even if they study music, so what could she do?"

Every time their Second Aunt came to visit them, she would say to Luo Yu, "Little Yu, you must learn to be flexible and face reality. Not everyone can realize their dreams of becoming a celebrity. To live means to be down to earth!"

"You rascal, why don't you listen no matter what we tell you? Why are you still continuing to sing? Can't you hear that we mean well for you, Little Luo? Why are you being so thick-skinned and shameless?"

"Little Luo, don't sing anymore."

"Little Luo, you won't make it."

"Little Luo, just do your job well as a teacher."

"Little Luo, be filial to your parents and do well at your job."

That's honorable. What will singing do for you!?"

"Little Luo..."

"Little Luo..."

Suddenly, a loud and high-pitched screaming "lept" out from the television screen!

"Who told you I can't sing!"

At that moment, Luo Yu's parents each felt a punch in their guts!

"Who told you I don't understand living!"

"Who told you I don't know the blues!"

"Who told you I don't know glory!"

A continuous, soprano voice came wave after wave!

It felt like a roar that carried a tinge of unwillingness buried deep inside the soul!

Suddenly, Zhang Ye pointed at the television screen. "Someone has turned around! Teacher Chen Guang has turned around!"

“Ah!” Her father stared with his eyes wide open!

Her mother was also stunned!

Within three seconds, Zhang Ye said again, “Teacher Fan Wenli has also turned around! Quick, look, Teacher Zhang Xia also tapped the button! There’s only one left...only one left...oh! Teacher Zhang Yuanqi has also turned around! All four coaches have turned around! All of them have chosen your daughter! Teacher Chen Guang is standing up now and giving a thumbs up! Look at the audience! The audience is bubbling with excitement! It’s fantastic! Luo Yu is really fantastic!”

Her father asked in shock, “They turned around? All of them turned around?”

Zhang Ye said, “That’s right!”

Her father said excitedly, “The coaches like my daughter’s singing?”

“That’s for sure.” Zhang Ye said, “The coaches want Luo Yu to join their own teams, that’s why they chose to turn their chairs around. Next they will have to fight for her to get her to join them!”

Her father said in a shaky voice, “Are you saying the coaches and audience felt that my daughter...sang well?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yes! Look at everyone’s expressions and their cheers! All of this is for your daughter! Everyone likes her!”

Upon hearing this, Luo Yu’s mother looked at her daughter on the stage and the cheers coming from the audience. She did not know why, but her tears started to flow down uncontrollably. She couldn’t stop crying!

My daughter really knows how to sing!

So there actually were many people who liked listening to my daughter’s singing!

So it’s us who had been wrong!

Seeing his wife cry, Luo Yu’s father also cried, but it was out of happiness. His tears also carried some guilt in them because they had never supported their daughter’s dreams before!

.....

In the main recording studio.

Onstage.

The music ended and all the lights in the studio came on.

“How exhilarating!”

“Right, it was awesome!”

“I listened until my back was sweating!”

“Where did this woman come from?! Is she a professional singer?
How did she sing so well?”

“If she isn’t a professional singer, then she’s definitely
professionally trained in music!”

“This voice has a lot of impact to it! It’s even stronger than a
man’s voice!”

“Isn’t it surprising that such a fat woman could sing until she
touched the hearts of people? I have listened to many people
singing this song before, but none of them could sing it like she did
and make my blood boil with excitement!”

“Splendid!”

“She sang this song in such a divine manner!”

The audience was heatedly discussing her!

Ha Qiqi and the staff of the program team were totally surprised. The scene's effect was fantastic. Only Zhang Ye could have had such foresight! Luo Yu's voice was too awesome! This odd voice had somehow ignited the entire studio!

After the lights came on, Luo Yu, standing on stage, clearly saw the vista around her for the first time. When she saw the four coaches and realized that they were actually facing her instead of with their back toward her, and the numerous audience members who were screaming and applauding her, Luo Yu was also stunned. She stood there without moving a muscle, dazed on the spot!

What's the matter?

What was going on?

Luo Yu could not believe the image in front of her eyes!

Chen Guang could no longer wait and praised, "You're amazing!"

Fan Wenli exclaimed, "Your voice is so special! It's really nice to listen to!"

Luo Yu still felt confused. "I-I did not get eliminated?"

Zhang Xia smiled and said, "Of course not! All four of us have already turned around."

Upon hearing this, Luo Yu mind was blown then it turned blank. Afterwards, she did something that made everyone laugh. She threw out both her arms with the microphone in one of her hands and let out a long scream. “Ahhhhh!” She was so excited she did not know what to do!

They really turned around!

They’ve really acknowledged me!!

Chapter 671 – A Tug Of War Between The Coaches!

Luo Yu was screaming.

The coaches were laughing good-naturedly.

Luo Yu's voice was loud and she had a strong lung capacity that allowed her to scream for 5 or 6 seconds.

.....

In the second recording studio.

Although Zhang Ye was stationed over here, he could still fully control the entire situation at the stage and venue with a walkie-talkie.

He pressed the microphone attached to his shirt collar and said, "Coaches, please control the time a little and don't let it drag on for too long."

.....

Over at the stage.

Zhang Yuanqi took control of the situation and asked, "What's

your name?”

Luo Yu stopped screaming and then while panting said, “I’m Luo Yu. Luo Yu!”

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, “You have an extremely unique voice. The roughness of your vocals can be heard in every syllable when singing and it has a very magnetic charm. What made you want to perform this song here today? ‘Who Told You I Don’t Understand’ is a very popular and well-known rock song that many people have sung before. But this is the first time I’ve heard a woman sing it in such a way, that power and screaming, I believe everyone who is here in the studio today could totally feel that.”

Zhang Xia looked at her. “The line ‘who told you I can’t sing’ made me shudder. Do your family members not support your singing?”

Luo Yu confirmed, “My parents don’t support it while all my relatives, friends, and the people around me don’t think that I can sing well. They believe I have a lousy voice. The first person to support me was The Voice’s Executive Director Zhang Ye. I still remember very clearly that day when Teacher Zhang personally came to the school to look for me and told me that I must definitely audition for The Voice. At that time, I did not agree as I felt that my lousy voice was not fit for television, but in the end, I somehow ended up here! I chose this song because this was always what I wanted to sing to others! I think the lyrics of this song are the words that I’ve always wanted to say!”

Zhang Xia laughed. “We should all thank Zhang Ye then. If not

for him, we still wouldn't have known that there was such an powerful female rock singer in the country."

Luo Yu quickly said, "Thank you, thank you, coaches, I was simply too excited just now. I had not expected that people would actually like to listen to my singing! I...I...this is too unbelievable!"

Chen Guang commented, "Be more confident, you were great. Those who did not appreciate your singing are people who don't understand music. You were saying that Teacher Zhang went to your school to look for you? What do you do?"

Luo Yu repeatedly answered, "I'm a teacher, a teacher!"

The coaches were suddenly enlightened!

The audience also finally realized that it was no wonder she could sing so well. It was because she's a musician!

Fan Wenli did not feel as surprised anymore. She asked, "You're a music teacher at which school?"

What? Why did they think I'm a music teacher again? This was not the first time that Luo Yu was facing this question, so she tersely said, "That's not it. I, I teach P.E.!"

What?

What did you say!?

Fan Wenli was stunned.

You're a P.E. teacher!?

A majority of the audience nearly fainted at once. Did it need to be so dramatic? A physical education teacher? As a P.E. teacher, you could even sing the song in this way? You are defying all logic! However, Zhang Ye was actually brave enough to allow a fat lady who taught P.E. to appear on stage and even trusted her to be the opening act? From this alone, the audience realized the audacity of Zhang Ye once again!

All of a sudden, Zhang Xia became more interested. Her curiosity was piqued. "Who did you learn to sing from?"

Luo Yu blinked. "I didn't learn from anyone, I just blindly learned by myself."

At this moment, Chen Guang lightly slapped the armrest. "Whether you teach P.E. or shot put, I want you. Don't hesitate anymore and just join my team. Among the teachers here, only I sing rock songs, so I can give you more guidance than any of them."

Zhang Xia exclaimed, "You're already starting to grab people?"

Chen Guang laughed heartily. "Little Luo, don't forget that I was

the first to press the button.”

Zhang Yuanqi spoke, “Heh, I seem to have heard someone saying something just now? Saying something about how only one of the coaches sing rock songs?” She gently rubbed her ears as if she had not heard clearly.

The audience was tickled.

Chen Guang had no response. F**k, he had forgotten about Sister Zhang.

Zhang Yuanqi looked askance. “Old Chen, why do I remember that, when I was singing rock, it seemed you hadn’t debuted yet?”

This truly was the case. Although Zhang Yuanqi was similar in age to Chen Guang, she had debuted much earlier than him.

Chen Guang said helplessly, “But Sister Zhang, you have already turned to performing love songs and folk songs.”

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and replied, “But my foundation as a rock singer is still there.” She looked at Luo Yu and added, “Besides, both of us are women so you should come and join my team, Little Luo.”

Chen Guang immediately said, “Little Luo, come to my team, I can give you my guidance in all aspects!”

Luo Yu was hesitating.

Fan Wenli pointed at her husband and abruptly said, “I know all the people he knows and I can also give you whatever guidance that he can give to you!”

Chen Guang stared at her. “I can give her my advice on how to sing rock, but it’s not like you can sing rock yourself!”

Fan Wenli said confidently, “Little Luo, come to my team. I will get Old Chen to teach you if it’s something that I can’t teach you!”

Chen Guang nearly fainted from anger. “I’m actually speechless!”

Fan Wenli firmly said, “I want this person!”

“Impossible! Don’t even think about it!” Chen Guang grunted.

Fan Wenli stared at him and actually got up from her chair and walked over to him. “Say that again.”

Zhang Yuanqi turned sideways and said, “Good god, they’ve started to fight. I’d better hurry and get far away from the two of you!”

The audience burst out into laughter!

Zhang Xia smiled at Zhang Yuanqi and said, “Weren’t the two of them proclaimed as a ideal couple of the entertainment industry?”

“They were before they came here.” Then Zhang Yuanqi laughed and added, “But after recording this episode, that might not be the case anymore!”

“Hahaha!” The audience roared with laughter again!

Exciting!

What a funny scene this was!

This segment with the coaches fighting for the contestants to join them was as awesome to watch as the contestant’s performance! They started fighting over the contestant! They’ve really started to fight over her!

For the other talent shows, the coaches always maintained a cordial relationship with one another. In some talent shows, if a coach signaled their intent and interest in a contestant, then the other coaches would not attempt to take them. At most, they would banter for a bit. Meanwhile, there were even some talent shows that skipped this segment altogether and segregated by gender or age groups for the coaches to manage. There was no such thing as a selection segment! The Voice of China had clearly subverted the traditional approach singing talent shows had. They actually dared to add in a selection segment for the coaches to “battle it out,” something no one else would even risk thinking

about. This made the audience become very excited quickly!

Zhang Xia—a veteran songstress!

Zhang Yuanqi—a very popular Heavenly Queen!

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli—an ideal couple!

The songstress raising eyebrows at the Heavenly Queen? A great battle between the ideal couple? Did it need to be so stimulating? Did it need to be so...exciting! But that's exactly what we like to see!

Shocked, Ha Qiqi said, "Why are the coaches..."

Wu Yi wiped away his perspiration and remarked, "So that's how the taking of contestants work!"

Zhang Zuo, Little Wang and the others were also stunned while looking at the coaches!

Zhang Ye did write out the segment of the coaches competing for contestants on the program proposal but he did not mention it in detail or how it would be done. No one could have expected that this segment's effect would turn out to be like this! They were really arguing! They were really fighting!

Jiang Yuan watched with extreme surprise!

Some of the leaders from Central TV and many of the staff from the other program teams were also stunned in amazement. They were completely convinced by Zhang Ye's program planning ability! Even without asking, they knew that such a scene was definitely not due to the coaches' sudden inspiration. That was because no other talent shows had such a segment of picking contestants like this. It was absolutely Executive Director Zhang Ye's pre-planned idea. He probably had more than one private meeting with each of the coaches separately on how to fight or compete for the contestants to join them. That was the reason for such an unexpected effect on the set!

It could even be done like this?

They really did it like this!

Everyone was convinced!

Chen Guang said, "Little Luo! I can't wait anymore!"

Fan Wenli smiled and said, "Little Luo, you better think carefully. I believe that you can see who the decision maker is between the two of us."

Chen Guang: "..."

The audience began to cheer them on.

“Oh!”

“Haha!”

Zhang Yuanqi tried to stir things up even more. “Old Chen, if I were you, I wouldn’t take that lying down!”

Chen Guang slapped the chair. “I will not take that lying down for sure. My wife is normally very reserved at home. Why did she totally change after coming here!?”

Fan Wenli said, “That’s because Little Luo has the voice that I’ve been waiting for! I can give way for anyone but Little Luo!”

When they were almost done fighting, Zhang Xia looked at Zhang Yuanqi. “Fine, I think we should not get involved in this anymore.”

Zhang Yuanqi saw that the couple was tearing into each other, so she did not get involved with them anymore. Noticing the time was almost up, she controlled the tempo and said, “Little Luo, please make your decision now.”

Luo Yu was in a dilemma.

5...

4...

3...

Luo Yu grit her teeth. “I will choose...Teacher Chen Guang!”

Dong dong dong dong, the sound effects immediately sounded!

The moment Chen Guang heard that, he immediately laughed hysterically!

Fan Wenli gave a bitter smile, then glowered at Chen Guang. “Fine, I’ll show you when we get home!”

Zhang Yuanqi was delighted and said, “Old Chen is in danger.” Then she looked at Luo Yu and advised, “You must learn diligently from Teacher Chen Guang since he has risked his life to exchange for you!”

Zhang Xia also laughed, “Hur hur hur hur.”

Luo Yu immediately ran toward the coaches with excitement and hugged them. “Thank you, thank you!”

The audience was not surprised Luo Yu chose to join Chen Guang’s team. This was an understandable decision. But regarding the “great battle” on the set, it was very unexpected and too funny!

At this moment, the first contestant to qualify on The Voice was

born!

Luo Yu left through the backstage entrance. The coaches' chairs also turned back around to their original positions.

It was as though the audience was pumped full of adrenaline and already extremely looking forward to the next contestant to appear on stage.

.....

From the third camera's view.

The four coaches were having a discussion.

Zhang Xia sincerely commented, "That Little Luo was really awesome."

Fan Wenli agreed, "That's right."

Chen Guang cupped his hands. "I'm sorry, I got the first move, haha."

As they chatted idly, the four coaches were already forming their judgment of The Voice. Before today, they had not had any contact with the contestants at all, and it was also their first time experiencing the segments such as competing for people and the turning around of their chairs, so they were unfamiliar with it.

After going through the entire process once, they had a deeper understanding of this program. This was a good show that was different from other singing talent shows with its huge stage, high-end equipment, great audio quality, professional host, and high standard in the contestants. From the start until now, it was almost perfect and it was something that the coaches had not expected!

Honestly, if she were standing on any other stage, Luo Yu's voice would likely get drowned out, just like how none of her friends and relatives had thought that her singing was good. During the preliminary audition, Ha Qiqi and the rest of the program team, too, did not think highly of Luo Yu. However, upon further analysis, this was actually not Luo Yu's fault or that the audience didn't know music. This was entirely because of the stage they were on!

In daily life, everyone would think that Luo Yu had a lousy voice.

If she was on the stage of other programs, Luo Yu would probably be judged more on her looks and bloated figure than her voice.

Even if the four coaches here listened to Luo Yu's singing on the streets, she would probably be overlooked as well. After all, everyone's definition of what a singer should be would always more conservative in this world. The common values they looked for would be: singing well, having a mellow voice, and looking good.

However, The Voice of China's stage was different. The most unique feature on this program was that the back of the four

coaches' chairs would always face the stage, thus not letting the coaches see the contestants. Hence, the coaches could only judge from the voice alone and if the contestants all had mellow voices? And they were all trained in music with slick singing? Then how would they be able to differentiate who was good or bad? How would they be able to differentiate each contestant's uniqueness? There was no way to do that! As a result, it would naturally all come down to the uniqueness of the contestant's voice. If they couldn't see the face, then the voice would become the "face" of the contestant!

In that way, the audience watching the program would also unconsciously be brought into this mindset. Even though they could see the contestants, they know the coaches were unable to see them. That would subconsciously increase their anticipation of the outcome of the coaches' decisions. Sometimes, when the voice and the looks of a contestant differed greatly, the audience would become even more excited and feel that it was a novelty!

It was this stage of The Voice that had made everyone's focus be on the contestant's voice. This was a great, pioneering move. Together with a stage that cost over 10 million, audio equipment worth over 20 million, in a quiet environment everyone could listen with concentration, Luo Yu's unique voice and charm was suddenly amplified for everyone to hear, thus leading to this amazing effect and impact of the stage!

Not a single one of those factors could be omitted!

And Zhang Ye had miraculously achieved all of it. He had even visualized and planned out this scene from the moment when he

started making the program proposal!

Was it due to the success of the stage?

Was it due to the effects of the equipment?

Was it due to the coaches' knowledge and experience?

Was it due to the strength of the contestants?

No.

Everything was down to Zhang Ye's planning and direction. He had calculated everything to make this work!

The appearance of the first contestant on stage had left everyone in shock and awe of the power of a voice. Who would have thought that such an overdone genre of singing talent show could even be made into something like this!

Chapter 672 – The Second Contestant Comes On Stage!

Backstage.

In the second recording studio.

The door opened and Luo Yu came rushing in. “Dad! Mom! I did it! The coaches have chosen me!”

Her father said with excitement, “We saw it! We saw it all!”

Her mother said with tears in her eyes, “My child, I’m sorry. We haven’t given you any support all these years!”

“Mom, what are you saying, it’s OK!” Luo Yu went over to hug her mother, while also crying. “It’s alright!”

Her mother was choking back tears. “Wu wu wu, in the future... In the future, sing all that you wish to sing...wu wu...your dad and I...we will not stop you anymore!”

Luo Yu said while crying, “Mom!”

Her father’s eyes were also becoming wet as he said, “Child, in the future, just do what you enjoy. Your mom and I will support you!”

“Dad! Thank you!” Luo Yu felt that at this moment she was probably the most fortunate person in the world!

Zhang Ye and the cameraman were both beside them, looking on but not interrupting the moment. This was a scene that left Zhang Ye very satisfied, making him feel that his hard work in recent days did not go to waste. He had fulfilled the goals and expectations he had set for himself, setting up this stage and making it a place where dreams could come true—this was important to Zhang Ye.

Luo Yu had done beautifully!

After this, it was up to the others!

Truthfully speaking, Zhang Ye still felt a little nervous, not because he doubted the quality of the contestants he chose, but their ability to perform on a stage. Most talent shows usually did not re-record the round in which the contestants performed unless it was due to equipment malfunctioning or external factors. Recording again because a contestant did not perform up to their potential? The coaches would not agree and neither would the audience. Whether they could make it or not depended on the three minutes they were given. Everything would be determined then and there. Naturally, this was a very big test for the contestants.

Who was the next contestant?

Yes, it was time for the train driver to step up!

.....

In the main recording studio.

On and offstage, everyone quieted down.

The lights were also turned off as everyone focused their attention to the stage without blinking.

At this moment, a burly man appeared in sight of the audience. He was very tall, around 1.85 meters, and with just a few steps, he had already walked to the center of the stage. He looked visibly nervous, holding the microphone tightly in his hands, then loosening his grip, then tightening and loosening again. Finally, he was able to calm himself.

The music started.

A melody began playing.

At the coaches' chairs, the four of them were talking to one another.

“What song is this?” Chen Guang apparently thought that this melody sounded rather familiar.

Fan Wenli, who had started out as a music teacher and was more professional in this area, had identified the song with just the starting melody. “This is ‘Please Fall In Love With Me,’ but I think it’s an arranged version.”

Zhang Xia closed her eyes out of habit to listen.

Zhang Yuanqi also appeared to be was anticipating something.

The melody danced and sounded very touching. The next moment, the voice of the contestant rang out.

“Hey...”

This voice that came out immediately made the coaches look at each other.

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, “It’s a guy.”

Fan Wenli said, “For a love song like this one, I don’t think many guys would attempt it, isn’t that right?”

Chen Guang made a sound of confirmation. “And to sing it well is even more difficult as this song is more exquisite.”

Zhang Xia said with her eyes closed, “His voice sounds quite fine, so we’ll have to see how he performs it. The first contestant, Little Luo, was simply too stunning, so with her opening performance,

the contestants that come later would definitely be more pressured.”

This song was the same one Sun Daxuan had performed for Zhang Ye in the preliminary auditions of The Voice. Later on, the music arrangement teacher and Zhang Ye both thought that he sang this song well and it fit his singing style too, so instead of making him change songs like Luo Yu did, they stuck to using the same one.

Sun Daxuan had come to the main part of the song and had dived into its emotions.

“Hey...”

“Hello...It’s me.”

“Hey...”

“Please...Love me.”

“Hey...”

“Have you ever heard the wind blow?”

“That’s me, softly speaking.”

That haunting feeling, that exquisite enunciation of the lyrics. Although it was a man's voice, the entire audience was still touched by it as they couldn't help but clap a little.

“Hey...”

“Hello...It's me.”

“Hey...”

“Please...Love me.”

Singing skill, intonation, level of exquisiteness, there was nothing to nitpick at all!

The first contestant was already very good, but no one could have expected the second contestant to be this good either. For a burly man, he could actually sing a love song to this degree!?

Amazed, Fan Wenli breathed in and raised her hand up with some hesitation, hovering it above the red button.

But suddenly, before she could move, Zhang Xia beside her hit the button with her hand. Her chair turned around as Fan Wenli was left stunned, then subconsciously hit the button quickly as well!

If she didn't hit the button for this contestant, who would she hit

it for?!

If it were any other talent show, such a voice would have the potential for a top three finish. From a certain angle, it could even be said that this voice was comparable to theirs as professional singers!

Just a split second separated the two coaches, as they both turned around at almost the same time. When they saw the burly man on stage, Zhang Xia's eyes narrowed while Fan Wenli was surprised. The exquisiteness and emotions portrayed in that voice were not really something they would connect to someone who looked like that. Based on Fan Wenli's experience and feelings, she had thought that the person on stage would turn out to be a fair, thin, and scrawny guy, but little did she expect that he would turn out to appear so rough and tumble!

Seeing Fan Wenli's expression, Chen Guang immediately asked, "What's the matter?"

Fan Wenli looked at him and immediately beamed while shaking her head. "Nothing."

Chen Guang said, "Hah?"

Fan Wenli warned, "You better not turn or else you'll regret it!"

Pfft! When the cameraman positioned for shots of their angle heard this, he couldn't help scoffing. The scene of the couple

bickering was such a tease, starting from the time they were fighting over the contestant earlier.

Chen Guang wouldn't have any of it. "I'd be stupid if I believed you."

Pa. He also hit the button. Chen Guang was also a crooner of love songs, but he didn't usually sing it in such a smooth way. Logically speaking, this contestant would not suit his style, but since it was a competition, the composition of the teams they chose would definitely have to be better balanced. Chen Guang couldn't possibly go and choose all the contestants who had the same style as him to be on his team, could he? If he did so, then the entire competition wouldn't have much meaning anymore! This person clearly could sing, so if he could be pulled onto the team, then Chen Guang would surely welcome it. The more the merrier. Besides, as a professional, as long as it wasn't jazz or some other forms of foreign music he wasn't familiar with, he could still coach the contestants.

Three out of four coaches had turned!

When Chen Guang saw the person on stage, he also let out a "wow" in surprise.

Every time a coach turned around, the audience would give a round of excited applause!

"Another one has turned!"

“The singing is really good!”

“It’s nice to listen to this!”

“Although he does not have the explosive force of the first contestant, his smoothness in singing is too awesome. It sounds even more touching than if it was sung by a woman!”

“This person is definitely going to be a key contestant!”

“I like him, I like him!”

“He isn’t as good as Luo Yu.”

“He can’t be worse than her. They’re both very good!”

“Everyone has their own judgment. In any case, I think that this person sings amazingly!”

“There’s so much emotion in his singing!”

Earlier, Luo Yu had taken the stage with a rock song to pump up the entire atmosphere of the studio, but when Sun Daxuan took over, it changed the charged up atmosphere to a beautiful and graceful one. The beautiful picture that existed in his singing voice had infected everyone and they all moved to a different mood and feel!

The song was over.

Compared to Luo Yu, Sun Daxuan was much calmer. Only the look in his eyes revealed just how excited he was at this moment as three of the coaches had turned around for him!

Ahhh!

In his mind, Sun Daxuan was already shouting out loud!

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, “Hello, please introduce yourself first.”

Sun Daxuan promptly said, “My name is Sun Daxuan and I’m 26 years old. I work as a train driver!”

The audience burst into an uproar.

“Eh?”

“Holy shit!”

“He drives a train?”

Earlier, it was a physical education teacher, and now a train driver? The occupations of The Voice’s contestants are too f**king complicated!

Zhang Xia was very curious about this. “You have a very interesting job.”

Sun Daxuan quirked a lip and said, “It’s a pretty busy job since I have to be on the train every day, but when I have nothing to do, I sing. There’s nothing to be afraid of since no customers will be listening.”

Zhang Xia asked, “Why?”

Sun Daxuan replied, “Because I drive a cargo train.”

Amused, Zhang Yuanqi inquired, “What made you want to come and join this competition?”

Sun Daxuan answered very honestly, “It is because I really like Teacher Zhang Ye. I am a hardcore fan of his, so for his programs, his poems, the songs that he has written, I’ve watched, read, and listened to them more than once. Since Teacher Zhang Ye had created a new program and sent out an invitation to apply for the show, I just came without thinking. Actually, before coming up on stage, I hadn’t really thought that any of you coaches would turn around for me. I, I thought I would leave after singing this song!”

The coaches were all laughing. One of them said, “Too bad Zhang Ye isn’t one of the coaches then.”

Sun Daxuan lightly mocked, “It’s not that. I also really, really,

really like you all as well!”

Fan Wenli said, “I would like to hear from Sister Zhang on why she did not turn around.”

Zhang Yuanqi looked over at Fan Wenli. “That’s because I don’t really sing such exquisite-sounding love songs. I do not have the voice to do so. That’s why I feel that Little Sun’s style would be more suitable for you, Wenli, and I decided that I wouldn’t want to take him from you.”

Fan Wenli said happily, “Thank you, Sister Zhang!”

Zhang Xia didn’t like the sound of that. “Yuanqi, why aren’t you pulling for me instead?”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed gleefully. “Maybe in the next round.”

Zhang Xia then said to Sun Daxuan, “Little Sun, come and join me.”

Sun Daxuan said, “Grandma Zhang, my parents especially like you.”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed, “Oh, seems like Grandma Zhang has no chance with him at all.”

Zhang Xia: “...”

The audience all laughed.

Sun Daxuan felt even more embarrassed. “Then...”

Fan Wenli immediately said, “Little Sun, our style of singing is exactly the same. If you join me, I will teach you well. On top of that, I will invite you to be my guest for my concert that’s happening in the middle of the year!”

The audience gasped in astonishment.

Chen Guang immediately said, “I will also invite you to be my guest for my concert this year!”

Fan Wenli stared at him. “What’s the meaning of that, Old Chen?”

Chen Guang smiled and replied, “It’s just normal competition.”

Fan Wenli said, “You already have a good contestant with you, so if you steal a contestant from me again, I better check if our feelings for each other are still as deep as before!”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed and remarked, “Whoa, their relationship is already breaking down!”

Hearing this, the audience all burst out in laughter.

Chen Guang also withered but just rolled his eyes.

In the end, Sun Daxuan's choice was of no surprise to everyone. He said, "Thank you, teachers, I will...I will choose Teacher Fan Wenli!"

Hearing her name, a glittering grin appeared on Fan Wenli's face. She told him, "You've made a smart choice!"

The audience was once again discussing what was happening.

"Haha, Old Chen was terrified!"

"But the contestant's choice of Fan Wenli was absolutely correct."

"Yes, Fan Wenli's style is the same as his!"

"This person's singing is really nice to listen to. When the program gets broadcast, I will definitely download the live version's MP3!"

"I'm wondering why we have never seen such good contestants before in the past? Why did they only appear on the stage of The Voice? How did Zhang Ye find them?"

"Who knows!"

“I find it strange too. On the other talent shows, only the top two or three will have such a level of singing, no? Those contestants are even mostly professional musicians or artists, so how come the contestants on The Voice have jobs such as being a train driver or a P.E. teacher and yet still sing on a similar level to them? They might even turn out to be better than the champions on those other programs? Could it be down to whoever had the highest-end audio equipment?”

“It kind of has to do with the equipment, but it’s still mainly because of the program’s production concept. The Voice focuses only on finding the best voice, regardless of looks or occupation, so anyone can apply and take part. There’s a saying that goes: ‘The talented are among us.’ Those words are definitely not false, but it’s just that those singing talent shows in the past always judged based on voice and looks, so naturally, those who looked too average would have been eliminated! In the other shows, it’s likely that such people did not even make it past the preliminary auditions!”

“This program is indeed interesting!”

“Yeah, the more I watch it, the more I find it to be really good!”

“Ai, there comes the next contestant!”

Chapter 673 – Starring Qian Pingfan In The Finale!

The third contestant got on stage.

Her name was Shi Fangru and she was going to perform a song that another contestant had sung during the preliminary auditions. The title was “Blooming.”

“Flowers bloom on the window sill.”

“But you aren’t here.”

“Remembering that spring, when you were still beside me.”

“These petals and your smiling face.”

“The flowers have bloomed!”

“But I’m crying!”

“Why did you go!”

This person sang in a very standard way and was not as amazing as those two before, although she still did quite well!

This song moved both Zhang Xia and Fan Wenli and the two coaches turned around for her. As for Zhang Yuanqi and Chen Guang, who knows what considerations they had, but they did not press on the button.

When Zhang Ye was not on stage, Zhang Yuanqi took over the hosting job. She asked, “What is your name?”

Shi Fangru replied, “My name is Shi Fangru.”

Zhang Yuanqi said, “What do you do?”

Shi Fangru smiled and said, “I don’t have a job. I’m a housewife. I stay at home to care for my kid.”

Fan Wenli sounded surprised as she remarked, “Oh, I couldn’t see that at all. You have children already? Then how old are you?”

Shi Fangru said, “I have a baby face and everyone says I look younger than I am. Actually, I’m 34 years old and my child is in primary school.”

Fan Wenli said, “Then you should come to my—”

Before she could finish, Zhang Xia found a chance to interrupt, “The other coaches all do not have children yet, but I have five and they were all brought up by my hands. I also have a lot of grandchildren. If you join my team, not only will I be able to mentor you in music, I can also teach you how to bring up your

children!”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed. “Grandma Zhang has dealt her finishing blow!”

Zhang Xia said, “Of course. All the contestants have been snagged by the couple, so if I don’t make my move, I will end up with nobody on my team!”

In the end, Shi Fangru chose Grandma Zhang to be her coach. No one knew if she did so because of the talk about the children or because she was touched by Grandma Zhang’s sincerity. Fan Wenli seemingly looked regretful, sighed, and ranted about it for quite a while. It was clear that she liked that contestant very much, but just couldn’t snatch her away from Teacher Zhang Xia.

.....

Following that, the contestants appeared one after another.

For the fourth contestant, Zhang Xia and Chen Guang turned around at the last second. This was a contestant who performed a folk song that needed powerful vocals and an extraordinary range. Teacher Zhang Xia, without much effort, lured the contestant to join her team. In terms of these folk music and bel canto style of singing, even if the other three coaches tried their very best, they wouldn’t be a match for Zhang Xia.

The fifth contestant...

The sixth contestant...

The seventh contestant...

For all of the contestants who had appeared on stage today, they all received acknowledgment in the form of having the coaches turn their seats around for them. On the higher side, all four coaches turned, while on the lower end, there was just one coach who turned their chair. For instance, only Chen Guang turned around for the seventh contestant, so that didn't lead to the contestant getting a chance to choose their coach and was automatically assigned to Chen Guang's team.

Up until now.

Zhang Xia had two contestants in her team.

Chen Guang had three.

Fan Wenli had two.

Only Zhang Yuanqi, who might have higher expectations, did not turn around for anyone except for Luo Yu's performance. Her team was currently still empty, but she did not seem to feel anxious about it nor did she lower her requirements. She insisted on waiting for that voice which could move her to turn around.

.....

It was now 3 PM in the afternoon.

The coaches and audience were all feeling quite tired.

At this moment, Zhang Ye came out from the backstage and yelled out some instructions. He said, “All teams, let’s take a break for ten minutes. After the break, we will commence with the recording for the last contestant.”

Zhang Yuanqi did not move.

Meanwhile, Zhang Xia, Fan Wenli, and Chen Guang stood up to go to the restroom.

Hearing that, many of the audience members were also led out of the recording studio for a water break, to relax in the corridor, or go for a bathroom break.

“I’m feeling exhilarated from today’s recording.”

“Yeah, what an exciting show.”

“However, it’s a little bit anticlimactic.”

“Yes, I feel the same. Perhaps, because the start was too amazing

—even though the contestants who appeared later were very good as well—they didn’t have the abilities like the contestants in front of them, who gave us goosebumps after listening! Uhh, could it be that those were all the strong and capable contestants they found in the auditions? So they ended up getting arranged to appear at the beginning by the program team? And there are no more great contestants? If that’s the case, then the anticipation level for the later episodes will definitely drop by a lot. There’s nothing to look forward to at all!”

“I don’t know.”

“Stop thinking too much. Having so many who can sing well is already very good. Of these seven people, even the most average one could dominate all those contestants in the other talent shows!”

“Even if we say that, the opening stage contestants were too awesome and that increased my anticipation for the show thinking that there would be even better contestants later on.”

“Oh come on, getting such contestants is like finding a needle in a haystack. You can only get one in every million people, it’s not like you can just easily pick them up off the street. So having those opening stage contestants already wasn’t easy. I bet Zhang Ye went scouring around the country just to find them. In my opinion, it’s better that we don’t have too much expectation. The contestants from now on should only be like most of what we just heard. There won’t be someone else like Luo Yu who had such shocking vocals. All the trump cards for The Voice have already been played.”

“I think so too.”

“Ai, that’s true, where could they find so many amazing contestants anyway!”

“Even so, this show is already incredible. At least I know that I’ve never, ever watched such an exciting talent show before!”

“Zhang Ye truly lives up to his name!”

During the break, Zhang Ye was still busily handling some issues.

He found a staff member and asked, “Have we brought Qian Pingfan’s parents over to the studio yet? Why don’t I see them?”

That staff member answered, “They’re on the way right now. They were held up at the airport for a very long time because they have never traveled by plane before. They got lost after they got off. When I found out later, I quickly found someone to drive there to pick them up!”

Zhang Ye said, “Where are they at now?”

The staff said, “They are already at North Third Ring Road, so they will be arriving very soon.”

Zhang Ye said, “Hurry the driver up some more. Otherwise we won’t be able to finish the recording in time!”

Ha Qiqi came over. “Director Zhang, why not arrange for another contestant to appear first?”

Zhang Ye shook his head firmly. “No way, today’s recording must end with Qian Pingfan as the final act. No one else can take her place.” The contestants’ appearance order was all arranged by Zhang Ye who worked overnight for many days. Who came first, who came last, who was slated to appear in which episode, all of these details were very important. This order of appearance was worked on over and over for a long time before it was finally confirmed!

“Then let me call the driver to hurry him up!”

After the ten-minute break, Zhang Ye extended it for another ten minutes.

.....

Just before 3:30 PM.

Zhang Ye finally found Qian Pingfan’s parents who had just arrived. The two of them were in the forties, but, possibly due to the fact that they were farmers and had to work out in the fields, getting battered by the weather, their skin didn’t look too good. It made them look older as well, as though they were already in their fifties.

“Hello, how are you?”

“Where is our son?”

The couple did not speak Mandarin too well, talking with very heavy accents.

Zhang Ye brought the two of them into the second recording studio. “It’s good to see both of you here. Qian Pingfan is currently backstage getting ready to go on the main stage. He will be appearing very soon. Here, you can see him on this TV.”

Pingfan’s father asked, “Who are you?”

The cameraman said, “This is Teacher Zhang Ye.”

The couple had looks of confusion. “Oh, hello.”

Seeing that the couple did not know who Zhang Ye was, the cameraman wasn’t surprised either. He understood that Qian Pingfan’s parents were not familiar with events in the entertainment industry, so he spoke again changing his wording, “This is our executive director.”

Only then did Pingfan’s father react with some surprise. “Director?” Maybe he felt that way because he wasn’t expecting someone this young to be a director.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Just call me Little Zhang.”

Pingfan’s mother could not help asking, “Director, our son is really going to be on TV?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yes, but it’s just the program recording now and this TV is connected to the main recording studio. Only at 9 PM tonight will the show be broadcast.”

Pingfan’s mother wanted to speak but stopped short of saying anything.

Pingfan’s father remarked, “Did you all get something wrong?”

Zhang Ye asked, “What did we get wrong?”

Pingfan’s father said, “Our son is just a bicycle repairman. There are no people in our family who know how to sing.”

“You’ve never heard Qian Pingfan’s singing before?” Zhang Ye asked.

Pingfan’s mother said, “No. He only knows how to farm and repair bicycles. Our son does not have any talent, so of course we have never heard him sing before!”

Zhang Ye did not know how he should explain things. Unlike Luo Yu’s parents who always heard Luo Yu’s singing but felt that she

did not sing well, Qian Pingfan's parents had not even heard their son's singing before. Even if Zhang Ye tried to explain it, he felt that it would be useless. But that was also the reason why he tried so hard to invite Qian Pingfan's parents to the set. He called them countless times tirelessly trying to persuade them with his speech, and even booked the hotel accommodation and air tickets before he got them to agree reluctantly to come to Beijing. Zhang Ye had no other motives but to let Qian Pingfan's parents listen to their son's singing and learn that he knew more than just farming and repairing bicycles!

Chapter 674 – A Laborer Contestant?

In the main recording studio.

Everyone on set had already rested for a long time now.

Jiang Yuan turned his head and asked, “What’s going on?”

Fu Sihong said, “I don’t know, let me check it out.”

Some distance away, Zhang Zuo was walking over from afar right when Fu Sihong and Jiang Yuan called him over.

The executive producer of The Voice, Fu Sihong, asked, “We’ve had a break for more than 20 minutes already, haven’t we? Why are we still not continuing to record then? The show is set to be broadcast tonight, but we still have to finish recording and post-production.”

Fu Sihong was sitting below the stage, feeling more like an outsider. During the show’s production to recording, he barely took part in any of the work. Right now, everything regarding The Voice was dictated by Zhang Ye alone, so Fu Sihong had no reason to try to barge in and take over at this point. He himself understood that well, so he did not try to blindly pass along any instructions either. After all, in terms of the pulling in of sponsors, the program planning, and the production, he could not hold a candle to Zhang Ye. Even if he tried to order the team around, they would probably not follow his instructions and instead seek Zhang Ye’s opinion. That would cause him more embarrassment, so of

course he would rather just continue being the figurehead executive producer that he was and occasionally check in on the progress of the show.

Zhang Zuo immediately answered, “Director Zhang was waiting for the contestant’s family members. They have only just arrived, so there was a slight delay.”

Fu Sihong said, “Then couldn’t we have just switched a contestant to record?”

Zhang Zuo said, “I don’t know about that. The order of appearance was told to us by Director Zhang.”

Jiang Yuan suddenly suggested, “Did he plan the appearance order properly? The two contestants at the beginning were great and amazing, lifting everyone’s mood to a high. But now, the ones who appeared later could no longer keep that atmosphere going. You all should have just arranged for Luo Yu to appear at the end so that the televised effect would be better.”

Zhang Zuo said, “Director Zhang should have already considered that, but I don’t know too much about it.”

Jiang Yuan lamented, “The trump cards should never be used at the beginning, they should always be left for last. We have to be flexible about such things, or else it will affect the overall quality of the show.”

Fu Sihong also chimed in, “If Luo Yu was the final act, she would definitely be able to excite the whole audience. It’s just too bad that she was the first contestant because it’s too difficult to find someone as amazing as Luo Yu.”

Even though they said that, the first episode of The Voice’s recording had given them a huge surprise. They were really just nitpicking details now. In reality, they were amazed by it all. They had not expected that this proposal of The Voice by Zhang Ye, which they did not feel optimistic about at the beginning, could actually be done in such a way. With the mindset of achieving perfection, they naturally wanted someone who was as good as Luo Yu to be the final act of the episode. However, they also knew that it was not practical to think that way since a contestant like Luo Yu was hardly ever guaranteed and not likely to appear again!

At this moment, the earpiece of the program team staff crackled, with Zhang Ye issuing some instructions.

“Everyone get into position. We will begin recording in one minute.”

“Yes!”

“Received!”

“OK, Director Zhang!”

“Understood!”

“Already in position.”

The staff members responded in succession.

.....

At the backstage entrance to the main stage.

Qian Pingfan was already waiting here.

Ha Qiqi handed the microphone to him. “There’s still one minute before you step on, Little Qian.”

Qian Pingfan was a nervous wreck at this moment and beads of sweat were rolling off his head onto the floor. He was a simple laborer who came from the countryside and had never witnessed such a grand situation before. He asked, “My parents really came?”

Ha Qiqi said, “Yes, they’re backstage.”

Qian Pingfan pulled a long face as he said, “My parents have never heard me singing before. I, I never sang, not even once, when I was at home, so they don’t know anything.”

Wu Yi smiled and told him, “It’s time to show them what you can do then.”

Qian Pingfan was clearly very respectful of his parents. “But I’m afraid that I won’t sing well. Those contestants before me all performed extraordinarily well. I definitely can’t do better than them.”

Wu Yi said, “Says who?”

Qian Pingfan said, “I’m not better than them, really!”

Ha Qiqi encouraged, “Do you know what Director Zhang said about you? He said that the final act for the first episode of The Voice would be you. It has to be you no matter what!”

Qian Pingfan felt even more pressured now. “But just look at my clothes...”

The program team provided makeup services but not the clothes and costumes the contestants wore. Those would have to be arranged by the contestants themselves. Qian Pingfan was just a bicycle repairman and did not even earn 2000 RMB a month, so he obviously couldn’t afford a good wardrobe. He was just wearing his usual getup today, an old outfit whose color had already faded from washing. It did not look too appealing.

Wu Yi said, “That’s fine. Director Zhang has said that there’s no need to dress well to hide your identity. Just wear your own outfit and present yourself as you. There’s nothing to hide, so just let everything go and sing. Let your parents hear your voice, and let everyone else hear it too!”

In the audience.

When many of the staff members saw Qian Pingfan getting ready to go on stage, they started whispering.

“It’s Qian Pingfan’s turn!”

“I know about him, he’s up as the final act today, right?”

“Yeah, Director Zhang specifically arranged it.”

“Can he do it? That voice of his is a little...”

“I think he’s very good! I heard him sing during the preliminary auditions and I sincerely like it!”

“Even if you like it, that doesn’t mean that the audience and coaches will be able to accept it.”

“That’s true, Qian Pingfan is unlike the other contestants and is a little bit special. If we’re talking about all the contestants of The Voice, then he is definitely the most controversial one. He’s going to be a risk!”

“Let’s see how everyone reacts!”

The countdown began.

Three...

Two...

One... .

The recording started!

“Now let’s welcome the next contestant!”

This voiceover was Zhang Ye’s recorded introduction.

Suddenly, the stage lighting dimmed in accordance to pump up the atmosphere in the studio.

Qian Pingfan hesitantly took a few steps, then gripped the microphone tightly and walked up on stage while trembling. Compared to Luo Yu and a few other contestants, he was much more nervous and had already subconsciously hunched his back.

Ha Qiqi was extremely worried about him. She shouted to him from below, “Little Qian, straighten your back!”

Only then did Qian Pingfan slightly straighten his back, although his movements were still very stiff.

Wu Yi said, “All the best! It’s all up to you now!”

At the same time, Qian Pingfan’s figure on stage became visible to the audience.

Jiang Yuan was stunned.

Fu Sihong also blinked his eyes doubtfully.

The audience were also having similar reactions, feeling especially surprised.

To put it in perspective, the earlier contestants who had appeared were made up of people like a housewife, a physical education teacher, a train driver, or white-collar workers, etc. Some of them also did not have good looks and were even fat or skinny, but at least they all looked like city dwellers, having a decent fashion sense. Even if they wore t-shirts or a tracksuit with athletic shoes, they looked clean and groomed. After all, they knew they were going to be appearing on television, so they found a decent-looking dress or shirt to wear. But this person standing in front of everyone now stunned them a little. This contestant’s fashion sense was too low-class. And even though his clothes had been cleaned very well, they looked very old and worn. His white athletic shoes also looked like they had been washed so many times that they had turned yellow. As for his hairstyle, it was similar to his fashion sense. He sported a buzz cut and looked a little backwards without any makings of a singer. Furthermore, everyone who saw him knew he did not seem like the kind of

person who purposely made his clothes look old to sensationalize himself. It was obvious to all of them that he was a laborer.

“Man!”

“This person is a contestant too?”

“This competition really has all kinds of people.”

“Yeah, why is there a laborer?”

“This contestant doesn’t look at all like the type of person who knows how to sing!”

“Could this person have joined to try to gain notoriety by shocking everyone?”

“I think he might be. Who knows, he just might belt out a viral internet tune¹ and shock the entire studio.”

“Haha, that’s totally possible!”

“What the hell, even a laborer has come knocking on the doors of a talent show! The contestants from earlier had performed their songs very well. Although the ones who appeared in the middle were not as good as those who started the show, at least they were all above average. But this last performance of the day? They’re actually letting a laborer be the final act? What is the program

team thinking!”

“It’s definitely not the program team’s problem. They must have no other, better contestants to send out anymore. Didn’t we analyze the situation already? That there were only so many good contestants and Zhang Ye had arranged for them to all appear first to create a spectacular effect for the show, so the contestants after that could be a mix between good and bad. This is not something that can be controlled, so I can understand what the program team is doing. They actually have no more good contestants left, so what else could they do? Why not just send out a laborer contestant to shock everyone by singing a ridiculous song as a publicity stunt in order to force discussion onto the topic.”

“Oh, that’s probably true.”

“Yeah, there’s that possibility too.”

“Still, they shouldn’t have rounded out the number of contestants by inviting just anyone. Isn’t this a show that keeps harping on its principle of only listening to the voice and nothing else? Yet they found a laborer to come here to make a fool out of us!”

“How disappointing!”

“The greater the expectation, the greater the disappointment!”

After a fiery start to the program, everyone’s mood was

drummed up to a high and was kept there throughout until a few contestants who were clearly not as good as the ones before them performed, bringing the mood of the audience down by quite a bit and leaving them feeling letdown. When that happened, they were still hoping that there might be someone worth watching in the final act, but it somehow ended with this contestant appearing in front of them. As a result, the disappointment they felt now was unavoidable.

The reaction of the audience was clear.

Jiang Yuan thought that they were in trouble now.

Several leaders of Central TV were also frowning in silence.

Even if you did not have any good contestants, you shouldn't have used a laborer to serve as a stopgap. It wouldn't matter if you had found someone average instead. At least that wouldn't stir up such a large controversy and disapproval. The Voice had gotten off to a good start and amazed everyone at the beginning, yet it ended with you guys screwing it up at the critical moment? This program could very possibly end up with nothing to show for despite all the effort and money spent, all because of a laborer?

Wasn't this a mess!?

How could Zhang Ye have possibly made such a mistake!

“Where's Little Zhang?” Jiang Yuan asked.

Fu Sihong said, “Probably backstage.”

Jiang Yuan had wanted to stop the recording and summon Zhang Ye and force him to arrange for another contestant to take this laborer’s place. This sort of stopgap measure would really destroy their reputation and destroy the victories they had secured at the beginning of the recording!

The coaches had already turned their chairs around and were facing the audience. They could not see what was behind them and could only analyze the situation of the contestant from the reactions of the audience members.

Zhang Xia said, “Eh, this contestant seems to be stirring up some kind of controversy?”

Chen Guang said, “I don’t know, but everyone’s faces look a little disappointed?”

Fan Wenli said, “I guess it must have not fulfilled everyone’s expectations.”

Zhang Xia said, “That can’t be helped. How would there be so many voices that could amaze everyone. It’s good enough that the show found one or two such people.”

The coaches did not harbor much hope as a result of the audience’s reaction. They also adjusted their mentality for the

performance. In any case, they would just turn around if it was good, and not do anything if it was not. They understood very well that a talent show would also include less capable contestants since it was not possible for every one of them to be the very best!

Chapter 675 – Astounding The Entire Venue!

Onstage.

Qian Pingfan also took in the reactions of the audience.

They were all doubting!

They were all disappointed!

Almost no one held any hope for him!

In such an atmosphere, Qian Pingfan had somehow quieted down instead. He took a deep breath and calmed his mind. The anxiety he had was no longer as heavy as before. He was just a bicycle repairman who never liked to appear in the limelight or attract attention because that would be too stressful on him. He was afraid that he would disappoint all those who had hopes and trusted in him. But now, the disregard of the audience relieved him of a great part of this stress!

Don't be afraid!

Don't be afraid!

Just sing bravely!

You can do it! You definitely can do it!

He turned his head back and lightly nodded.

The next moment, a peaceful introduction began playing.

Violins played the melody and was a tune very familiar to everyone!

“Ah?”

“Isn’t this the song Zhang Ye adapted from his poem?”

“It’s ‘Wishing We Last Forever’! Zhang Yuanqi’s song!”

“What? Wasn’t this laborer going to sing a viral internet song? Why did it turn out to be this soothing song?”

“I guess I can only go hur hur at this!”

“Let’s listen to his performance. It’s definitely going to be shocking!”

“I just hope it won’t be too terrible.”

“This laborer actually intends to sing such a difficult song?”

When the audience heard the melody of the song, none of them thought that this contestant would be able to sing it well. “Wishing We Last Forever” might look like a simple choice since it did not have any parts that required the singer to sing in a high octave. However, it was actually the most difficult song that could have been chosen. The more soothing a song was, the more it required the performer to be skilled and put their emotions into their singing. Because there was no high-octave singing and no explosive instrumentals to cover any flaws, it would all depend on the quality of the contestant to sing it well!

At the coaching panel.

Zhang Xia smiled. “It’s Yuanqi’s song.”

Fan Wenli said, “The melody has been arranged.”

Zhang Yuanqi smiled. “Let’s see how it goes.”

.....

Backstage.

Zhang Ye grinned. “It’s starting!”

Pingfan’s father was trembling in fear while Pingfan’s mother was confused, not understanding what was going on. They had never once heard their son singing a song and were afraid that if he did not sing well, he would get chased off the stage.

As his parents, they naturally knew what their son's voice was like. After puberty, their son's voice had turned out to be quite strange and different from other people's voices. He had often been subject to cruel jokes from his classmates and was even laughed at by his teacher. Although their son sounded like any normal person when he spoke, that was because he had trained himself to do so bit by bit. He purposely lowered and roughened his speaking voice just to sound like other boys so that he would not be looked down upon by his friends. But if he sang, they were worried that he couldn't hide that voice of his anymore, afraid that he would be exposed and once again get teased and mocked by others like in the past!

.....

In this beautiful atmosphere of the soothing melody paved by the sound of the violins and piano.

The four coaches had their backs facing the stage while the contestant's voice floated out and drifted out in the studio!

It didn't turn out like Qian Pingfan's parents were expecting, as Qian Pingfan did not hide his natural voice. Those memories of being made fun of by his classmates and the despising looks from others had all been flung to a faraway place!

Today, he wanted to become the real him!

Today, he no longer wanted to act like he was the same as other

people!

He wanted to sing! He wanted to sing loudly for everyone to hear!

“When will the moon be clear and bright?

“With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky.”

As his voice came out, the entire studio audience suddenly fell silent without warning!

Some of those who were mocking the contestant and chatting had their expressions frozen in place!

Some of those who were playing games on their cell phones with their heads lowered all of a sudden stopped with what they were doing!

Or rather, it could be said that, when the contestant had sung the first word of the lyrics, the entire studio was suddenly enveloped in an eerie atmosphere!

“ ... ”

Silence!

It was totally silent!

Jiang Yuan was stunned!

Wu Mo was stunned!

Fu Sihong was stunned!

The audience, only just earlier listlessly grumbling and disappointed, suddenly looked like they had seen a ghost at that moment. All of them raised their heads to look at the stage and stared at the contestant no one had cared about a moment ago. No one dared to make a sound, afraid that it would break the silence!

They were all dumbfounded!

Every one of them, dumbfounded!!

Qian Pingfan stood proudly on stage, his back no longer hunched. In addition, he did not have that expression of weakness anymore as he now appeared...gloriously radiant!

“In the heavens on this night,

“I wonder what season it would be?”

The voice was like a lover’s whisper!

It was too gentle, too beautiful, and too soothing!

.....

Backstage, his father's mouth was wide open. "This...this is sung by my son?"

His mother stared unblinkingly at her son on-screen. She was worried that the audience would look at her son differently because of his voice!

That kind of gaze was something she had seen too often!

That kind of mocking laughter from others she had heard too often as well!

She did not expect for her son to strive for excellence, nor did she hope that her son would be recognized by others. She only wanted them to not look down on her son!

.....

Over at the coaches' side.

Zhang Xia whose back faced the stage was also shocked. "This female voice...it's almost as good as Wenli!"

Fan Wenli was also very surprised. This was Sister Zhang's song but compared to Sister Zhang's version which had a hint of her magnetic voice, this contestant's voice sounded more like her own. It even sounded more ethereal than her own voice and more gentle and beautiful. Fan Wenli had no choice but to admit that, even if she did a cover of "Wishing We Last Forever"—not a live version but a studio recorded version, and did it to the best of her ability—, it would only turn out to be OK. But she knew that this contestant was singing live and not in a recording studio. This ability was way too amazing!

Chen Guang was also taken by surprise. "There's even this sort of contestant on The Voice?"

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, "Zhang Ye has left the best for last!"

Zhang Xia heaped on the praise, "I thought that the good contestants had already appeared at the beginning, but I never expected that there would still be a surprise at the end. Who would have thought that this surprise would come this early too? Besides this is no longer a surprise, this is just me marveling at it all. This girl's voice is really too beautiful. There's a uniqueness in it. In the entire music industry, only Wenli and a few other established female singers have this kind of standard! This should be a professional singer, right?"

Chen Guang said, "This female contestant is even more professional than a professional. Could it be that Zhang Ye has arranged for an established female singer to guest star in this episode? Judging from her voice, it sounds like Sister Meng?"

Surely Sister Meng would not be here, right?”

Fan Wenli thought about it for a while before shaking her head. “It’s not Sister Meng. This voice is much younger. Besides, a singer of Sister Meng’s caliber wouldn’t come and join a talent show, would she? Besides, the audience did not even cheer much just now, so it must be a contestant that they don’t know...Ai.” When she was referring to the audience, Fan Wenli looked at them and was suddenly shocked. “What’s going on? Quick, take a look at the expressions of the audience members. What’s happening?”

Zhang Xia also realized. “What kinds of expressions are those?”

Chen Guang said, “Ah? Is it really so nice that they would have such expressions?”

The view of the audience from their seats was too amazing!

A plump audience member had his mouth opened so wide that even his molars could be seen!

A female audience member had jumped out of her seat and stared with her eyes so wide that it looked like her eyeballs were going to fall out!

Then there was a mother who brought her two children along. Her face was one of shock, while her two children looked startled. Their eyes showed a sense of extreme astonishment!

That's right!

It was startling!

It was astonishing!

The four coaches were utterly confused by the reactions of the audience. Honestly speaking, they themselves were already amazed by this voice and singing ability, even more amazed by it than Luo Yu's performance. But they couldn't understand why the audience had such exaggerated expressions. Was the singing so good that they had to react in this manner? Was the singing so good that it would shock all of you in this way?

"I'd like to ride the wind to fly home.

"Yet I fear the crystal and jade mansions

"are much too high and cold for me.

"Dancing with my moonlit shadow,

"it does not seem like the human world."

The contestant was probably getting into a rhythm as her voice became even more beautiful and touching. It was as if a lovestruck woman was gently speaking about something, as that last "world" was sustained into a higher octave. It flowed from the stage, and

like a sharp knife, stabbed into the hearts of everyone!

In that moment, the silence was broken as the audience suddenly boiled over!

“Ah!”

“Oh my god!”

“Oh, God!”

“Holy shit! Holy shit! “Holy shit!”

“That was too awesome! God! It’s great!”

The audience suddenly stood up!

Applause and screams suddenly reverberated through the entire studio!

Some of the audience members even went crazy and swung their fists around, shouting, as though they suddenly burned with passion! They couldn’t contain their excitement! They were so thrilled they could only use their shouts to express their emotion and that shocking disbelief they had!

The place was exploding!

The noise was deafening!

The four coaches looked at each other, feeling even more doubtful now.

What was happening? Why did everyone become like this? Logically, this song's melody was rather flat, without any high-pitched singing or screaming required. The song's tempo wasn't upbeat, wasn't a song tailored for a singing competition, and definitely couldn't bring out the atmosphere this way in the audience. Yes, this female contestant was indeed very good, but this should not be the effect she had on the audience. So why was the audience getting so crazy over her performance??

What is going on?

Are you all on stimulants?

The melody flowed soothingly through the air.

“The moon rounds the red mansion, stoops to silk-pad doors,
shines upon the sleepless,

“Bearing no grudge, / why does the moon tend to be full when
people are apart?”

Chen Guang couldn't be bothered with the irrational behavior of

the audience anymore. He was already enchanted by the performance. This was the best voice he had heard today. Suddenly, he remembered that this was the blind audition segment. He had forgotten all about it while listening to the singing, so he immediately hit the button, and as the chair turned, he chuckled while announcing, “This girl is definitely going to be mine! Don’t even think of taking her from me!”

When the chair turned.

Chen Guang looked forward with anticipation to the female contestant he had already set his heart on, ready to give her his trademark actions—the thumbs up as well as his encouragement and acknowledgment. However, the moment the chair fully faced the stage, Chen Guang became so shocked he retracted the thumbs up he was getting ready to show!

Chen Guang could only gasp in astonishment, “Ah!?”

How could this be?

How did it become like this?

He was dumbfounded. His body had become lifeless as he stared straight at the contestant onstage!

Fan Wenli also pushed her button and said with a smile, “What do you mean she’s yours. For a contestant like that, she must definitely be on my—” While she was saying this, the chair turned

around. The words Fan Wenli were about to say stopped right in her throat and she was forced to swallow them back down. Her expression had also suddenly turned into shock. Looking at the contestant onstage, she reflexively stood up from her chair and covered her mouth with her left hand, her face full of disbelief!

Chen Guang cried out, “Oh my god!”

Fan Wenli was also astounded. “How is that possible!”

The next to press the button was Zhang Xia, closely followed by Zhang Yuanqi who hit the button heavily. There was no hesitation at all. If such an excellent female singer could not get them to turn around, then who would they turn around for!

Zhang Xia did not wait for the chair to fully turn and immediately turned her head with all her strength to look at the contestant. She wanted to know who could have made Chen Guang, Fan Wenli, and the audience have such a reaction. But with that turn of her head, Zhang Xia was also dumbfounded. She had the same exact expression as all of them now. “Ah!?”

This...

This is...

Zhang Yuanqi followed. When she saw Qian Pingfan, she was also clearly taken aback. Then she suddenly laughed out loud. “Oh! Can it get more dramatic than that!?”

A getup of old and worn clothes!

A buzz cut!

It was a man!

It actually turned out to be a man!!

At this moment, the four coaches had a vision of ten thousand lines of “what the f**k” flashing in front of their eyes. They even suspected that they might have seen wrong and thought that it might have been a lip syncing performance. As such, they kept staring hard at the contestant, hoping to see some mistakes in the lip sync to confirm that this was not sung by him!

Qian Pingfan performed with his high-pitched singing, becoming more and more emotional.

“People experience sorrow, joy, separation and reunion,

“The moon may be dim or bright, round or crescent shaped,

“This imperfection has been going on since the beginning of time.

“May we all be blessed with longevity, / though thousands of miles apart, we are still able to share the beauty of...the moon

together!”

It was sung by him!

It was really sung by him!!

The coaches were already standing!

Chen Guang kept waving his thumbs up!

Fan Wenli was so emotional she had raise both her arms and continuously clap over her head!

Zhang Xia could only stare at Qian Pingfan on the stage as her face revealed great shock, not knowing what to say to express her current state!

The entire venue was like a boiling pot of water!

Screams, shouts, and applause all came one after another!

Who said that this laborer was just to round out the contestant numbers?

Who said that the recording of the first episode would end anticlimactically?

Round out the numbers my ass! Anticlimactic my ass! It turned out that the bombshell was dropped at the very end! This voice was truly unbelievable!

Chapter 676 – The Selection Battle!

The second recording studio backstage was actually located very far away from the stage in the main recording studio. They were joined by a maze of walls and doors. Logically, the sounds should not escape from the main recording studio, even more so into the second recording studio. But at this moment, the program team's staff working at the backstage area were stunned to discover that they could hear the sound of cheering coming from the main recording studio. It was even a thunderous amount of cheering!

“What happened?”

“Did something happen out there?”

“Why is it so loud?”

“What's happening in the main recording studio?”

Most of these staff members here were only handling logistics for the program, so they basically had no idea of what was happening at the stage but felt something must have happened since the commotion was huge.

.....

In the second recording studio.

Zhang Ye also heard the rapturous applause and cheers from the door behind him. He too was very excited. “They’ve turned! All four coaches have turned around! He’s done it! Little Qian has done it!”

Pingfan’s father did not understand what was going on. “What is this about?”

Zhang Ye said, “That means all four coaches want your son to join their teams!”

His mother’s was getting teary-eyed. “They feel that our son... our son sang well?”

Zhang Ye said, “That’s right! Just listen to the cheers from the studio. All of that is for Little Qian!”

His mother’s lips were trembling. “But our son’s voice...he...in the past, many people constantly made fun of him. They...have always despised him!”

“I don’t know about his past, but I know that right now, there are a few hundred audience members and coaches who do not despise him!” Zhang Ye pointed at the TV for the old couple. “Listen to that, does that sound like ridiculing? Look at that, do those look like reactions from hearing a joke? Little Qian’s voice is indeed different from most people’s, but I guarantee that this difference does not mean that he’s worse off than other people. On the contrary, this difference is what makes him outstanding! Little Qian sang incredibly! Your son is definitely not worse off than

anyone!”

His mother wiped her tears away.

His father clenched his fist, touched.

.....

Onstage.

The music gradually came to a stop.

The applause came wave after wave, becoming louder and louder!

Qian Pingfan caught his breath and lowered the microphone, then looked at the passionate audience and the four coaches who looked like they were very inspired. His confident self when performing the song earlier suddenly crumbled. All of a sudden, he had become that nervous wreck again from before he went up on stage. He couldn't help it; these four coaches were all big shots. He could not see them when he was singing since their backs were facing him, but now that all of them had turned around, and with the sharp screams from the audience, Qian Pingfan didn't know what to do. He raised his hands, then put them down, then raised them again, not knowing where he should place them. But he knew one thing! The four coaches had all turned around for him. The audience also did not give him strange looks because of his voice!

Qian Pingfan tightly gripped the microphone and said, “I...I...”

He did not say anything besides “I” repeatedly. From the audience, another round of shouting began!

“It’s too good!”

“So good I’m crying!”

“Awesome!”

“Ahhh!”

“I really like this voice a lot!”

“It was sung even better than a woman!”

The audience was too passionate!

Zhang Xia did not wait for Qian Pingfan to introduce himself and impatiently asked, “Son, you’re really great! You’ve surprised all of us! I’ve been in this business for over 40 years, but I’ve never heard a man sing a woman’s song in a more womanly way than a woman could. I do not mean this in the bad way, it’s just that your voice is incredibly special! Your singing is also too outstanding! Every word of the lyrics, especially at the end of each line, carried feeling and emotion. It was very moving!”

Fan Wenli exhaled and said, “I need to calm my nerves first. You’ve given me a great shock, given us all a shock. Your voice is totally indescribable with words!”

Chen Guang kept repeating the same word: “Unbelievable!”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed. “How about we do this: let’s let the coaches and audience calm down first while you introduce yourself?”

Qian Pingfan immediately answered, “My name is Qian Pingfan.”

Fan Wenli said, “I’m very curious why you’re dressed that way today.”

He was wearing old and worn clothes that were torn, and to Fan Wenli, this did not match up with this contestant’s voice and singing ability. It felt like he was trying to create a buzz on purpose by making himself look very pitiful. Could it be that this attire and fashion had some sort of a special meaning to the contestant?

Qian Pingfan replied, “This is what...I usually wear.”

“Oh? What’s your profession?” Zhang Yuanqi asked.

Qian Pingfan scratched his head. “I repair bicycles.”

What?

Repair bicycles?

That's impossible!

Chen Guang said, "Little Qian, you better not be joking."

Qian Pingfan said, "I'm not joking."

Zhang Xia also doubted this and inquired, "How many years have you been repairing bicycles? When did you get into this line of work? Where do you work? We can investigate all of your claims."

Qian Pingfan answered, "I've been doing it for several years. I started learning from my master. Later on, I could repair them myself. I work at Lishuiqiao Station."

Zhang Xia sucked in a breath. "You're really a bicycle repairman?"

Qian Pingfan said, "I really am!"

The audience also nearly fainted at this reply. What the f**k!

Fan Wenli was a little unsure of what to say. "Just based that singing of yours, there aren't many people who graduated from a

university majoring in music that can do better than you. If you told us that you were a music teacher, we would have believed you too!”

Qian Pingfan was very flattered but quickly waved it off. “No, no, I’ve never been to a university before.”

Chen Guang threw his hands up. “I have nothing to say to that. This is truly unbelievable!”

Zhang Yuanqi looked at him and laughed. “How many times have you already said ‘unbelievable’?”

Chen Guang sighed. “But really, it’s unbelievable!” He said it again!

The audience laughed.

Fan Wenli blinked, then said to Qian Pingfan, “But from the way you speak, you sound normal, so why did you sing with such a voice? Did you purposely impersonate a woman’s voice? Was that imitation?”

Zhang Yuanqi finally said something. “That wasn’t imitation.”

“Oh?” Fan Wenli looked at her.

Zhang Xia said, “That’s what he originally sounded like?”

Chen Guang also looked toward Zhang Yuanqi, not knowing why she could be so sure that he wasn't imitation.

Zhang Yuanqi said, "If I'm not wrong, Little Qian's singing voice should be his natural voice, the one that he doesn't control. Instead, it's his speaking voice that he is changing, purposefully lowering his tone by a lot."

Fan Wenli appeared deep in thought. "Is that so?"

Chen Guang said, "That means that in his everyday life, whenever he speaks, he purposely controls his voice? Surely not, right? Wouldn't that would be too tiring?"

Zhang Yuanqi explained to them, but mainly more for the audience, "At the beginning, it might be tiring, but after some time, it would become a habit instead. Let me illustrate with an example. If a person with the same genes grows up in either Beijing or Shanghai, they will definitely speak differently. Everyone knows that when Shanghainese people speak, their pronunciation and tone is slightly higher pitched, especially women. That is what everyone knows as the 'flirty' tone, which is really just a slightly higher inflection in speech. Meanwhile, Beijingers speak in a more 'abrasive' manner. If you listen to Zhang Ye speaking, you'd know what I mean. The spoken language in Beijing goes downwards in inflection more often. All of this goes to show that the differences in a spoken language is affected by the location and dialect practices, and not down to the genes or the natural voice."

Saying that, Zhang Yuanqi used two styles of speaking to illustrate.

“Like for this sound.” — a very sharp way of speaking.

“And like this.” — which sounded very low and deep.

Zhang Yuanqi said, “Personally, I can produce many types of intonation when I speak, so if I speak with one of these styles for many years, my natural way of talking will become that way. This is why a voice can be easily molded with practice.” After she said that, she paused for a moment then continued, “However, no matter how much practice you have, your voice will not change too much at any particular time unless the vocal cords are damaged. My analysis is that Little Qian’s voice did not break at puberty or that it came and went very quickly, thus causing him to still keep his prepubescent voice. When all the other boys’ voices broke, his did not change much and that is why we have the fortune of listening to such an ethereal feminine voice. This should be the most natural state of Little Qian’s voice that can’t be covered up even if he forced his voice lower, like he does when he speaks.”

Qian Pingfan gave a hollow laugh.

Zhang Yuanqi said, “Can you talk to us in your most natural voice?”

Qian Pingfan was feeling a little embarrassed, but after considering for a bit, he used his most neutral voice to say, “Uhh,

will this do?”

His voice was immediately distinct from before. If anyone looked at him while he spoke, they might find his voice to be weird, but if their eyes were closed and they did not know the speaker's gender, 9 out of 10 people would think that it was a woman talking to them. This voice that Qian Pingfan spoke with was clearly closer to the voice that he had used to sing.

Fan Wenli was astounded. “That’s your real voice?”

Qian Pingfan scratched his ear and said, “It has always been. When everyone else at school had their voices change, mine didn’t, so I was always made fun of by others. Later, I began to purposely lower my tone and learned to speak like them, but when it came to singing, I wasn’t able to control it that way. I didn’t know how to lower my pitch while singing, so that’s why I have never sung in front of anyone before. I’ve always sung to myself with my MP3 player.”

Zhang Yuanqi smiled and said, “Look, I’m still the one who understand you best, right?”

Qian Pingfan was also convinced that his little secret was immediately seen through by Zhang Yuanqi and how he couldn’t hide it from her. Everyone else always thought that he had imitated a girl’s voice instead.

“That is why,” Zhang Yuanqi laughed, “If you don’t join my team, would you feel right?”

Hearing this, Zhang Xia realized something was wrong, so she quickly interrupted, “Ay, ay, ay, we’re not at the taking of the contestant segment yet, are we?”

Chen Guang also said, “Yeah, Sister Zhang, we’re still trying to understand the contestant’s situation, so why did you start pulling for him to join your team? Even if we’re allowed to start doing so, I should be the first one to do that. I was the first one who turned around after all.”

Fan Wenli promptly said, “Little Qian, come to my team, I will use all of my resources to help nurture you, then together, I will lead you and my team to become the champion!”

Zhang Yuanqi reacted to that.

A commotion broke out in the audience!

Ah?

Become the champion?

Isn’t that too too high of an evaluation!

Qian Pingfan also felt at embarrassed by this. “Ah!” Champion? He did not even have the expectation that the coaches would turn around for him, much less winning the competition!

Zhang Xia laughed. “Wenli, we’re still in the blind auditions!”

Chen Guang rubbed it in by uttering, “Hur hur, just let Wenli continue dreaming, let’s not wake her up.”

Fan Wenli: “...”

The audience was all laughing at this when the couple started their bickering again. These two better not get divorced after just one episode of recording The Voice!

Zhang Xia said, “Little Qian, you ought to think properly. My team is not well-rounded yet, but Chen Guang and Wenli’s teams already have all the big guns, so if you join my team, you’d definitely be my trump card. Didn’t Wenli say that she would get you the championship? If you come and join me, then I have the confidence to say that I can also win us the championship!”

Zhang Yuanqi again reacted to this. She grinned and remarked, “Are we already in the finals of the competition? Are we already deciding who the champion should be!?”

Qian Pingfan quickly said, “I didn’t sing that well, really, I didn’t!”

Some people would be modest, but those words from Qian Pingfan were definitely not humble. He had only joined The Voice’s preliminary auditions by chance. After he had an argument

with his master one day, he threw a tantrum and skipped work. He coincidentally saw the poster calling for The Voice's auditions on the same day, so he submitted his demo and application, but he never expected that he would be called for an audition the very next day. When no one gave him a chance, Zhang Ye went against everyone else to let him pass the audition and even supervised Qian Pingfan's rehearsals all this while. Having been through all that, he could finally stand here on this stage! Qian Pingfan knew that his future all depended on this moment, or perhaps it had already changed.

The audience also felt that life was like a drama. No one had any expectations for this laborer, but he had now become the apple of everyone's eye. All the coaches were trying all sorts of tricks to grab this contestant for their teams, and the audience was getting a kick out of watching it all!

Chen Guang and his wife once again had another great battle!

Both Zhang Yuanqi and Zhang Xia who were good friends despite their age also fought over it!

In the end, the situation nearly got out of control as Fan Wenli ran up directly onto the stage. "Little Qian, I don't need you to come over, I will go over instead. I will wait for you here!"

Chen Guang also came to the stage. "I will wait for you too!"

Seeing that, Zhang Xia also stepped up and went to Qian Pingfan. "Although my legs aren't what they once were due to age, for the

sake of winning the championship, I too must come forward!”

Qian Pingfan was feeling extremely embarrassed at this point and did not know what to do!

Only Zhang Yuanqi still remained in her coach chair. “Little Qian, make a decision! Don’t get pressured by those around you. Just follow your heart and feelings and make your decision!”

The coaches all stopped talking.

The rest of the place was totally quiet as the audience all waited for Qian Pingfan to make his choice. This person was slated to be a key contestant and whoever got him into their team might really end up as the champion!

Qian Pingfan was conflicted as hell. “I, I thought about...” After struggling for a long time, Qian Pingfan finally clenched his teeth, knowing that he had to make a decision and couldn’t drag his feet any longer. “After I passed the preliminary auditions, when the staff was getting me to fill out a questionnaire, there was a question that asked: should the four coaches choose me, who would be the first person I would choose, the second person, the third, and the fourth!”

Everyone concentrated.

Qian Pingfan took a deep breath and declared loudly, “The names I filled in were—Zhang Yuanqi! Zhang Yuanqi! Zhang Yuanqi!

Zhang Yuanqi!!!”

The audience cheered loudly!

Zhang Yuanqi snapped her fingers and laughed loudly! “Come on then! I’ve been waiting for you!”

Zhang Xia sighed, giving an expression of regret and a bitter smile!

Chen Guang also felt that it was unfortunate that he was unable to get a good contestant like this to join him. There was no way he could do it. He was up against the Heavenly Queen after all!

Qian Pingfan had written all four coaches names as Zhang Yuanqi? The song that he chose to perform for the competition was also Zhang Yuanqi’s “Wishing We Last Forever”? Perhaps this segment of the contestant choosing the coaches had already been decided from the beginning. Even if they had tried to take him from Zhang Yuanqi, no matter how much they said, it was probably all for nothing!

Qian Pingfan immediately ran over and disclosed, “I-I really like you a lot, Teacher Zhang Yuanqi. I am your hardcore fan. Last year, I saved up two months of my wages wanting to watch your concert, but the tickets were sold out, so I have always had some regrets!”

Zhang Yuanqi laughed. “From now on, you won’t need a ticket to

watch my concert. Just come, just watch, just listen anytime you want. Listen until you're disgusted!"

Qian Pingfan was surprised. "Is that really OK?"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Do you think my words mean nothing?"

"Thank you, Teacher Zhang!" In this instance, Qian Pingfan was fully satisfied. He felt that life was really too wonderful!

At this moment, a small incident happened. The cameras also managed to catch Fan Wenli and gave her a feature.

Fan Wenli was bitterly laughing and looking depressed. She was wiping the tears away from the corners of her eyes, dejectedly saying, "Why am I always the one who gets hurt!"

Zhang Yuanqi said to Qian Pingfan, "Look at that, Teacher Fan Wenli is even crying for you."

Zhang Xia laughed while patting Fan Wenli's back.

Qian Pingfan was feeling extremely anxious by now, so he rushed over to her. "Teacher Fan, I, I..."

Fan Wenli said annoyed, "I like you so much! Why didn't you choose me instead?!"

Qian Pingfan did not know how to reply and was about to cry from anxiety.

Fan Wenli said, “You still have a chance to change your decision, you should choose again.”

Qian Pingfan: “...”

Zhang Yuanqi playfully said, “Wenli, don’t be shameless and try to take my team member away.”

Fan Wenli laughed bitterly. “But I really like him so much!”

Chen Guang said, “Yes, he really sang very well!”

The matter was decided and Fan Wenli did not say anymore. She gave Qian Pingfan a hug and said, “Do well and learn a lot from Sister Zhang. In the future, when I hold my concerts, I will definitely look for you to be my guest!”

Qian Pingfan immediately said, “Thank you, Teacher Fan, thank you!”

Eventually, with the audience clapping and cheering, Qian Pingfan went through the qualified contestant’s corridor to the backstage. At this moment, he was finally showing his unbridled excitement. He threw out his arms with all his strength and raised them into the air to express the joy that he felt!

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Backstage.

Qian Pingfan pushed open the door and went inside.

His father called out, “Son!”

Qian Pingfan said, “Father, Mother, Sister Zhang has chosen me! I did it!”

His mother wiped her tears away and said, “We saw it too! Good! You’ve done great!”

Qian Pingfan and his parents were not people who were good with expressing themselves. The three of them stood there talking but there was no hugging at all.

Seeing that, Zhang Ye smiled and went over to give Qian Pingfan a hug. “Congratulations, Little Qian. Well done!”

Qian Pingfan quickly said, “Thank you, Teacher Zhang! Thank you so much!”

Zhang Ye said, “It has nothing to do with me, you did it by singing well.”

However, Qian Pingfan knew that it was due to Zhang Ye that he had made it this far. It was because Zhang Ye had discovered and acknowledged him. During the preliminary auditions, when none of the staff of The Voice's program team acknowledged him, it was Zhang Ye who stood forward to acknowledge him with explanation. He did not care about other's opinions and insisted that Pingfan be allowed to go through the auditions. Now, he even fully trusted him to be the finale in the first episode's recording and never once doubted him or thought that he wouldn't be able to sing. This trust given made Qian Pingfan feel very grateful!

To Qian Pingfan, if not for Zhang Ye, he knew that he wouldn't be standing here today!

It was Zhang Ye who had given him the first chance of his life to prove himself!

Chapter 677 – The First Episode’s Recording Has Ended!

The recording ended.

The first episode wrapped up with applause from everyone. Many of the audience members still had lingering feelings about what they had just seen and were still noisily discussing as they exited the studio.

“It was such a great show!”

“This show is too godly!”

“That’s right, it’s really too godly!”

“Zhang Ye’s reputation is goddamn for real!”

“This is the best show I’ve ever watched, and has the most sincerity among all the singing talent shows. The stage, lighting, opening theme song, host, and contestants are all the best in the industry. Actually, I wasn’t expecting much for a program like this but my friend gave me a free ticket and I didn’t want it to go to waste. Who knew I would receive such a huge surprise!”

“I just wonder what the viewership ratings will be like.”

“It shouldn’t be bad in any case!”

“When Zhang Ye said he that would ‘see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene,’ perhaps there might be a possibility that he can really do it!”

“That might not be the case. We still have to wait for the response after broadcasting. It’s tough to say anything until the moment it gets broadcast. There’s too many factors that affect a program in the variety industry nowadays, and the current demand is not that good either, so anything can happen. Don’t expect too much from the viewership ratings!”

“Then it would at least get 0.8% of the viewership ratings, right?”

“Well, it surely can’t get lower than the other talent shows!”

“Isn’t 0.8% of the viewership ratings considered too little? I can see it will get at least 0.9% of the viewership ratings!”

“For the premiere episode, the viewership ratings will surely be slightly lower. To get 0.8% of the viewership ratings would already very good. If the following episodes can still maintain the quality of the first episode, then The Voice surpassing 1% of the viewership ratings is definitely possible!”

“Let’s wait for tonight’s broadcast and see how it turns out!”

“Right, I’ll have to watch it again at night!”

“That was too fun! It was such an aural feast!”

The audience was chatting excitedly as they left the studio.

In the recording studio.

Most of the people who remained behind were the program team staff. They too were discussing this topic.

Little Wang said joyfully, “Do you think our viewership ratings can meet the target of the station’s 0.7% that was set for us?”

A female editor smiled and said, “I’m sure it will definitely be higher than that. As for how much higher, I do not know. I just have a feeling that our program will become very popular!”

Ha Qiqi arrived and joined in, “No need for a feeling, it will definitely be popular!”

Wu Yi was also extremely excited. He stated, “Right, that definitely won’t be a problem!”

A male editor said, “The contestants have performed very well today! Our audio systems’ quality was also fantastic. Before this, I was still thinking if it was too exaggerated and expensive to spend over 10 million RMB on the equipment setup. But after listening today, it’s doesn’t feel like it was expensive at all. Just from the

live studio effects alone, it was all worth it no matter how much we spent!”

At this moment, Zhang Ye returned.

“Director Zhang!”

“Director Zhang!”

“That was awesome! We were awesome!”

“The live studio effects were seriously awesome!”

“Director Zhang, your planning has really succeeded!”

“It won’t go wrong as long as we follow Director Zhang’s instructions!”

“From the audience’s reactions, the viewership ratings certainly look good!”

“Our hard work for the past few days have not gone to waste! Every night we stayed up late was worth it!”

Some of the female staff thought about these days when they worked to the bone, feeling so tired that they almost could not take it anymore and felt like their bodies would just give way. A few

times, they even wanted to give up, but in the end they managed to persevere. When they saw the results of their hard work, their eyes teared up. In retrospect, those bitter days were nothing much because they had produced a surprisingly good program. Their names would be on The Voice of China's production credits, so they were...the makers of this legendary program!

Zhang Ye had not said anything yet.

Jiang Yuan and Fu Sihong walked over briskly. Jiang Yuan looked extremely excited as he found Zhang Ye. "Little Zhang, can you give us a preview of the viewership ratings of The Voice!"

Zhang Ye said helplessly, "It's not possible to give an estimate on that."

Jiang Yuan said, "What's your own estimate of the viewership ratings?"

Zhang Ye said, "Don't we just need to meet the viewership rating of 0.7% that was set for us?"

Jiang Yuan rolled his eyes. "0.7% for the viewership ratings was just the lowest target set by the station for you all. Would you be satisfied with only 0.7% viewership ratings? Right now, I feel that it's not going to be a problem for your program to achieve 0.9% in the viewership ratings!"

Before, Jiang Yuan and many others in Central TV Department 1

did not feel too optimistic when they heard Zhang Ye's proposal. A majority of them had reservations about it and only a handful of people felt that The Voice was a feasible production. However, at this moment, everyone's attitude did a complete 180. Not only did Jiang Yuan stop regarding The Voice as a cult program, he was getting much more confident about The Voice. He felt that this program was so exciting that it had surpassed his expectations of excitement. That was the reason why he was forcing Zhang Ye to give an estimate of the viewership ratings.

However, Zhang Ye could not give an estimate. Back then, when the program was not yet approved, bragging was necessary so that he could show his confidence and the program's strong points to get the station's support. But now that the program was about to be broadcast, Zhang Ye did not wish to say those empty words anymore. It was also difficult to say them.

Back in his previous world, there was a compilation of viewership rating statistics for The Voice, but Zhang Ye could only use it as a reference figure and a gauge. He could not directly use those figures in this world, as after all, it was a different world, with different coaches, on a different television station, broadcast on a different day and time, and even the viewership ratings were measured with a different formula. This was no longer comparing apples to apples, so he could only use his world's information as this world has its own set of rules, market environment, and audience understanding of entertainment and the arts. Everything was unknown. The best Zhang Ye could do was recreating The Voice as closely to the original as possible, so that the features and most exciting segments of the show could be presented to the people here. When all was said and done, the viewership ratings would be left up to fate to decide!

After engaging in a little more idle talk.

Jiang Yuan patted Zhang Ye on the shoulder. “Carry on with your work first. After you guys have finished up, I’ll throw a celebratory feast for everyone tonight! This time, all of you have worked hard!”

All the leaders of Central TV Department 1 had smiles on their faces as they left the recording studio. After today, they had a brand new understanding of Zhang Ye’s capability at work. They also thought that their decision to invite Zhang Ye to join them and help turn the situation around while Central TV’s variety shows were at its lowest point was the best decision they made. It had to be said that The Voice was rushed out for broadcast at the last minute and the program team’s production timeline was cut by more than half. Even in that situation, they managed to completely fulfill their tasks. Not only did they manage to complete it, they even did it beautifully and created a great, unprecedented music show. The leaders of Central TV Department 1 were so impressed by Zhang Ye that there was nothing they could criticize him on!

This was what you called a talent!

This was what you called a capable person!

Onstage, only after the leaders left did Zhang Ye finally get the chance to speak. He hurriedly said to all the staff, “Everyone, listen to me, don’t celebrate yet. We will have plenty of time for celebrations later if we want to, but for now, we’ve yet to finish the most important task. The post-production work has not

started, so there's still plenty of work to do. Now, I want everyone to start their tasks following my instructions from earlier and get into action immediately! Make sure to finish editing the program by 8 PM so that we can make it in time for the 9 PM broadcast! We must keep our spirits up! It's the final push!"

"Understood!"

"Got it!"

"We'll definitely finish it!"

"We'll finish it even if we die!"

"Director Zhang, don't worry about it!"

Everyone responded in unison and with determination!

From the audience, the upper management of Brain Gold company had already left, but Wu Mo had stayed behind. When he saw that Zhang Ye was free, he walked up to him while laughing heartily. "Brother Zhang!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "CEO Wu."

Wu Mo immediately said, "The show is fantastic!"

Zhang Ye said, “How is it? Asking you to invest 100 million RMB in the title sponsorship wasn’t too expensive, right?”

“Not expensive at all! It’s worth this price!” Wu Mo said, “I knew you wouldn’t scam me. I can’t go wrong following you. Looks like I have made the right decision again this time!”

At this point, Zhang Ye instead downplayed, “We still have to see what the viewership rating is at the end. It’s difficult to have any opinion of it now. But I hope it can increase the sales of your Brain Gold by another 30%. If the viewership rating is screwed up, I really won’t have any face to see you anymore.”

Wu Mo said confidently, “The viewership ratings won’t be lousy!”

Zhang Ye laughed. “I’m also looking forward to it.”

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Backstage in the contestants’ lounge, the contestants who had appeared in today’s episode were called over. The four coaches wanted to chat with their team members privately and possibly point out some of their problems to improve on so that they could perform better during the group stages. All of this would help them choose their strongest team member to compete in a sing-off against the other three coaches’ team members.

“Teacher Zhang!”

“Zhou’er, your performance was not bad today.”

“Thank you Teacher Zhang.”

“Director Zhang, I did not perform well today.”

“It’s alright. You were just a little nervous and sang slightly off-key. Next time, relax more.”

Zhang Ye had praise and words of encouragement for them.

As they were talking, the coaches arrived to meet with their respective selected contestants.

Zhang Yuanqi had some other matters to deal with, so she did not say much and just smiled and waved. “Little Qian, come with me.”

Qian Pingfan bid farewell to Zhang Ye and some editors of the program team whom he knew. Then he left with Zhang Yuanqi. For now, Zhang Yuanqi had only Qian Pingfan as her team member, so it seemed like she was going to give him some guidance individually.

Zhang Xia found Zhang Ye and asked, “Are there any more good young singers among the contestants in the next episode?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Of course.”

Zhang Xia nodded. “That’s good, I’m looking more and more forward to the next episode! Back then, I joined the program because I couldn’t refuse your push and pull tactics. But now, I realize it was right to come to this place. I did not expect that there would be so many good voices in our country. Furthermore, they are all regular folk!”

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were quite shocked by Central TV Department 1’s new show. Actually, in the past, they’d also participated in other television programs so they knew the market and had their own judgments. For a program like The Voice, they could only use the word “amazing” to describe it. They had reasons to believe that once the program got broadcast, it would absolutely cause a national sensation and bring about heated discussions. For such a program, if they knew it would turn out to be this good, even if the program team did not offer them a high joining payout, Chen Guang and Fan Wenli would’ve joined for free!

They were also celebrities and needed exposure and excellent work. For an outstanding program like The Voice, which was broadcast on a large platform, it was no doubt that it would only come along by chance, not by searching for it. It would greatly help to increase their popularity as well, so a great show was definitely a win-win situation for the guests, television station, program team, and advertisers!

Chapter 678 – I Know Someone In Senior Management!

Night.

It was nearly 9 PM.

As the broadcast time for The Voice was nearing, the comments from the outside world and on the internet towards Central TV Department 1's new program increased. The majority of voices still inclined to the previous opinion. Looking at the number of votes on the topic in a Weibo poll, the netizens were still negative on The Voice. Most of the people still maintained the same attitude towards the program as per a few days ago, with the majority of them being pessimistic.

Interested: 27%

Uninterested: 71%

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On the Line 10 in the subway.

In a train compartment, some colleagues who had just left their night shift were chatting.

“What day is today?”

“It’s Thursday.”

“Oh, it’s already Thursday? The Voice of China is going to start broadcasting soon?”

“Heh, it really is. Let me check the time. Oh, it’s going to start in less than ten minutes!”

“I have to hurry home and catch it. I think I can still make it in time.”

“You’re going to watch a talent show? But it’s not interesting at all.”

“Not many people feel too optimistic about The Voice. It will certainly be more or less the same as those that came before.”

“I know, but Zhang Ye’s programs are usually full of surprises. I have been following since Lecture Room was broadcast and hope that this time he can produce another miracle. I also saw many comments listing The Voice’s various flaws and reasons for failure. Those were very reasonable and explained logically. However, since when we can use logical reasoning on a person like Zhang Ye? Judging from past experiences, sometimes the more others think that Zhang Ye can’t do well in certain things, the more likely Zhang Ye will do them well. That’s why I still have some expectation for his new program. Hopefully he can succeed like the previous times and not disappoint his fans!”

“I think you’re just deifying him.”

“In the past, Zhang Ye’s programs were pretty enjoyable to watch, but don’t forget, they were mostly pioneering works, such as a lecture program, a never before seen talk show idea, or a mass market variety show like Do You Remember. They have achieved success as original ideas and relied mainly on subverting the current trends. All of these worked to Zhang Ye’s advantage. But this time, The Voice is entering an already oversaturated talent show industry. I’ve never doubted Zhang Ye’s ability and always think that he has the capability of producing a good show. But I don’t know what he’s thinking, because instead of choosing another path that he could excel in, he chose to cross a bridge full of countless other singing shows. This program’s viewership ratings shouldn’t be that low—after all, it has Zhang Ye’s reputation on it and the names of Zhang Yuanqi, Zhang Xia, and the others holding it together—but the viewership ratings definitely won’t be too good either. The market is already too saturated. If they can even get a 0.7% viewership, they should be thanking the gods!”

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At a certain home.

A family of three was sitting in front of the television.

“Dad, switch the channel to Central TV Department 1.”

“What for? I’m watching soccer now.”

“The Voice of China is beginning soon.”

“No one thinks that show will be good, why should we watch it?”

“No matter what, I still have to take a look. If it’s not good, then we’ll switch to other channels!”

“How many singing shows have you watched in the past two years? You might not be sick of them yet, but I’m already disgusted by them. OK, OK, OK, I’ll switch over to it and you’ll realize what I mean when you watch it.”

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On a certain discussion forum.

In the entertainment page’s comment section.

“The Voice is starting soon, is anyone going to watch it?”

“I’m not going to watch it. It won’t be interesting.”

“I also can’t be bothered to watch it. I’m just gonna continue gaming.”

“Haha, I just want to take a look, not because I feel that this show will be good, but because I want to see how bad it will turn out. Singing shows these days are all dead on arrival, and with the current market sentiments for such shows, I don’t believe that Zhang Ye will be an exception unless he’s really superhuman. The same genre, the same kind of show, but if the other satellite channels could not do well with them, with so many program teams before them failing successively when it came to singing shows, then on what basis does Zhang Ye think that he can turn the tide? You’re too optimistic. In my opinion, Zhang Ye will be knocked off his perch this time!”

“Even if you put it that way, I cannot help wanting to watch some of it.”

“We’ll see. Let’s criticize him together later, hahaha!”

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On Weibo.

Some television industry insiders were also very active.

“Has anyone made an estimate on the viewership ratings of The Voice yet?”

“Our department’s internal analysis shows that it will get no more than 0.7% of the viewership!”

“Our side’s analysis results are similar. I want to see how Central TV Department 1 is going to deal with this matter now. After this show has been broadcast, let’s see if Zhang Ye still dares to boast. ‘Someday I shall ascend your highest heights to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene.’ When the viewership ratings come out tomorrow, this poem will become a ridiculous joke!”

“This kind of show that maliciously drives up the celebrities’ joining fees should be boycotted. A show that uses hype and driving up prices as a draw, what is there to look forward to? This is all just sensationalism. A steep price without basis will only cause the show to end up in a ‘cannot make ends meet’ situation. The whole of Central TV Department 1 will also be implicated, along with the Brain Gold company and the four coaches’ popularity. All of them will suffer a devastating blow through Zhang Ye’s antics in creating such steep prices in the market. The market has its own set of rules too, and just by paying such high joining fees, it does not mean that you’re guaranteed to get back the equivalent of what you gave!”

“I can’t wait to see Zhang Ye’s expression after the show has finished broadcasting. It’s a good thing to be confident, but blind arrogance will only mean that you’re the frog in the well!”

Jinshi Television Station.

Beihe Provincial Television Station.

Liaodong Television Station.

Jiangnan Television Station.

A famous Shanghai television program production company.

The Radio Broadcast & Television Station Association.

Everyone who posted on Weibo all had their titles and jobs indicated on their verified accounts. They were all people from the television variety industry and some were even leaders or famous analysts within the industry. Because of the overly steep prices of the title sponsorship and joining fees created by Zhang Ye's new show, the entire industry had been seriously affected. At the same time, The Voice was also facing a boycott and denouncement from all the peers in the domestic television industry!

In the end, just before the program was about to be broadcast, many advertisers also joined in!

“They’re selling the advertising rights for a few million each! That’s a really unreasonable demand!”

“You all were also quoted that kind of a price? It’s the same for us. I’m just wondering now if there was any company who actually dared to buy their advertisements. If they did, then they really must not lack for money!”

“Especially that Brain Gold company. A title sponsorship fee of 100 million RMB? I can only laugh!”

“I’m afraid the Brain Gold company will suffer a heavy loss this year! Just this 100 million RMB will be enough to make them suffer. Don’t even mention recouping their advertising costs, I think it would even be difficult to recoup a fifth of it!”

“That’s right, our company has worked with many television programs before. For those programs using Korean copyrights and 1.2% viewership, their title sponsorship fees only asked for 50 million. What right does The Voice have to demand 100 million? Don’t tell me that your viewership ratings can surpass 1%? This Zhang Ye is way too amusing!”

“Yeah, I don’t understand where his confidence coming from.”

The people making the snide remarks were mainly those company bosses or department heads who had come in contact with Zhang Ye for talks regarding the advertising rights before the broadcast of The Voice. In the end, the deals were called off because the price was too high. Furthermore, the price that both sides were willing to accept were highly disparate. This made many of the advertisers very unhappy. They felt that for such a show, which many people were pessimistic about, it was already goodwill on their part that they were still willing to purchase The Voice’s advertising rights. But never did they expect the seller to still be unsatisfied and even asked for a few million for the advertising rights, which was only for the price for a single advertisement. During the negotiations, some friction sparked between them, and as a result, their emotions were naturally incited. If we have the money, we would rather go and buy the already popular imported variety shows, don’t you think? Why would we spend 3 million RMB to buy the advertising rights for a domestic show in this market downturn? Everyone knows what

the situation is like with domestic variety shows. You want us to buy your advertising rights? Do you think we're crazy!?

These comments were mostly one-sided!

There was even some fake news incriminating The Voice appearing!

"I just heard from a friend that a big problem occurred at the recording of The Voice's first episode due to them not having enough time. The situation at the studio is all gloomy, so I advise everyone not to watch it!"

"I have a friend in the SARFT and he said that the SARFT is going to take action soon!"

"Yes, I've also heard about it. Zhang Ye was previously banned before and a severely punished target as well. Although his ban has now been lifted, the SARFT is always keeping their eyes on him. This time he has caused a disruption in the market prices, so the SARFT will certainly crack down seriously on him. Everyone, take note: whether The Voice will be able to be broadcast today is still something we don't know. It might be ordered to halt its broadcast at the very last minute as SARFT is already taking action now!"

"Is that true?"

"Holy shit, that can't be!"

“It’s real. This is insider news!”

“Ah? The Voice is going to be canceled?”

“Shit, Zhang Ye is finished again this time!”

An industry insider also posted: “The authorities should take serious action on such programs! I fully support the SARFT with banning The Voice!”

This rumor even appeared in the online news.

“The Voice faced with being taken off-the-air?”

“The Unlucky Zhang Ye and His The Voice of China!”

Voices of doubts and rumors were flying everywhere.

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At Central TV.

The program team staff of The Voice had just finished with the post-production after much crunching. The first episode of the program was finally completed. But when they saw the news on the internet, the exhausted staff suddenly panicked again.

Even Central TV Department 1's Deputy Director Jiang Yuan also felt a little panicky about this rumor, so he immediately made some calls to the station head to check out the situation. Since there no smoke without fire, he was really afraid that there would be some sudden changes!

Inside the office.

Zhang Zuo said nervously, "Director Zhang, what should we do?"

Ha Qiqi was also quite afraid. "The program we spent so much effort into making, could it just be banned like this?"

"The SARFT is really making a move? They are too much of a bully!" Little Wang, Wu Yi, and the rest were extremely furious. "Based on what can they ban our program!?"

Faced with so many rumors and the news online, many of their hearts were quivering!

Only Zhang Ye was the calmest in the whole of Central TV.

He said calmly, "Don't believe those rumors. They're whatever."

A female editor said, "But there is plenty of news spreading around now. Moreover, there was already some news stating that the SARFT was already kept their eyes on singing shows because there are too many television stations doing these kinds of talent shows and creating disorder in the market. I heard that the SARFT

are going to limit the approval of such singing talent shows!”

Zhang Ye said firmly, “Let me tell you this, the SARFT might ban any other programs, but it will definitely not ban ours!”

Zhang Zuo said, “Is that true?”

Ha Qiqi exclaimed, “Why?”

Zhang Ye said, “Get back to work and don’t listen to all that nonsense!”

Everyone was skeptical.

What do you mean by why?

What do you mean by if it’s true?

Zhang Ye thought to himself, my girlfriend is the SARFT’s Deputy Chief, in charge of all television programs’, movies’, and dramas’ approval and punishments! If The Voice really got targeted, would I not know? Besides, even if it really got targeted, with Old Wu there, could they even ban my program!?

Bullshit!

This bro knows someone in senior management!

Chapter 679 – Shocking The World With Speed Reading!

9 PM.

After the commercial break on Central TV Department 1, the logo of The Voice of China appeared at once on TV. With the accompanying background music, the introduction clip ran. The four coaches each made an appearance in it and a voiceover and captions introduced the coaches one by one, followed by the introduction of the blind audition rules.

The Voice has started!

The first episode was officially broadcast!

At the same time, many people were waiting in front of their televisions.

These included Zhang Ye's parents, his cousins, uncles, aunts; his friends like Yao Jiancai, Su Na, Tian Bin; his fans, Zhang Yuanqi's fans, Chen Guang's fans, etc. Most important of all, many of the people who were not optimistic about The Voice were also at this moment waiting in front of their televisions and tuned in to Central TV Department 1, curious to see what was in store. It was the same for those television industry insiders as well. Given, they were denouncing Zhang Ye's new show, but it was also because of this that they wanted to know firsthand what it was like, to see how flawed and how big of a failure it would be, so that they could attack Zhang Ye with everything they had gathered!

Those from Central TV, Beijing Television Station, Shanghai Satellite TV, all of them were currently focused on this program together!

Countless pairs of eyes were watching.

Countless people were doubting as well.

“It’s starting, it’s starting!”

“Didn’t they say it was going to get canceled?”

“Yeah, why did it still get broadcast then?”

“A rumor?”

“Let’s watch first, I’m afraid the show’s quality is more or less done for!”

“I’m so looking forward to it!”

“Let’s see what kind of show Teacher Zhang can come up with this time!”

“Hur hur, it would be strange if it’s good!”

“The Voice is a total joke!”

With this flurry of activity, the first episode of The Voice finally appeared!

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At Beijing Television Station.

In a certain program team’s office from the variety channel.

The television was turned on in the office premises. Seeing that the leaders were not around, the night shift staff switched the channel to Central TV Department 1 as everyone prepared to watch the hotly discussed show, The Voice of China.

“It’s coming.”

“The introduction has ended!”

“What are we watching this for? Central TV Department 1’s Thursday night host had a scandal and The Voice was brought on to fill the slot. With just slightly more than half a month’s preparation, they want to produce a large-scale variety talent show? That’s a total joke, just ask anyone in the industry if they could do it.”

“Yeah, even if you gave it two months of preparations, it

wouldn't be enough! For such a large-scale variety show, the minimum preparation time is three to six months. If the stage could somewhat be set up in time, it should already be good, so let's not even talk about the stage effects. Zhang Ye should have just come back to Beijing Television at that time. Just look at it now. He has been tasked to rush the program for broadcast so fast that he couldn't even finish the preparation work in time, so what's there to look forward to? He definitely won't have anything to show!"

They each had their own opinions of how the program would turn out.

As soon as they stopped talking, the scene on the television was showing the performance venue!

When the lights were turned on, the entire stage was lit up at once. In the midst of the audience's cheering, the stage lighting changed!

"I wanna fly to the sky, walk beside the Sun. The world waits for me to change it..."

"Never been afraid of others seeing my dreams. Here, I can make it happen!"

"Laughing loudly, let's walk side by side. Isn't happiness everywhere!"

“Casting off all worry, I stride forward bravely. Now I am taking center stage!”

Chen Guang!

Fan Wenli!

Zhang Xia!

Zhang Yuanqi!

The four coaches appeared on stage glamorously, with the new theme song pumping up the entire audience!

“I believe I’m me, I trust in tomorrow. I believe youth has no limits. Whether sunset at the beach or the crowded streets, it’s the prettiest paradise for me!”

It fell silent.

The program team’s office in Beijing Television was totally quiet!

A woman said, “This...”

A youth stared at the television screen dumbfounded. “Who just said that if they could get the stage up in time, it would already be very good?”

The girl who said that earlier could not muster up a response!

A middle-aged person was astonished. “Does that look like they just managed to get it up? That stage, that equipment, those audio effects, those lights, my god! How could that be something they set up in just 20 days! Are Zhang Ye and his team really all superhuman? Finishing up all that in half a month when others could not complete it even with a few months of production time? They even built the stage that magnificently? And it’s even superior in quality? Do all the people in their program team have eight arms!?”

The girl who who couldn’t say a word finally managed to say, “Zhang Ye and his team must have worked very hard or something. I really wonder how they did it.”

They also worked on shows, so they naturally understand the way things worked when making one. They understood just how impossible of a task this was, so many of the industry insiders were feeling even more pessimistic about this show. But who could have expected that the outcome was totally different from what they had assumed! They asked themselves, if they were Zhang Ye’s program team instead, could they do the same if they were given 20 days to create such a big stage and complete the auditions for the contestants? The answer was no!

They couldn’t!

This was an impossible task!

In the entire country, no program team would dare thump their chest and claim that they could do it!

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At the train station.

Many passengers were seated under a large screen, waiting for their trains.

“What the f**k! How much money did they spend on that stage setup!”

“This stage, those lights, why does it feel like I’m watching the Spring Festival Gala!?”

“Since when did Central TV become so generous? They must’ve really poured a lot of money into that!”

“How awesome! The stage and audio effects are amazing!”

“Listen to this song!”

“How nice!”

“This song is really great! Listening to it makes me feel really

pumped up!”

“Eh, seeing the opening of The Voice, it doesn’t seem to be as bad as what people were saying!”

“Yeah, keep watching, let’s see how it turns out!”

The opening theme ended!

Zhang Ye appeared!

.....

Beijing.

In a certain restaurant, in a certain private room.

There was a mini-gathering here arranged today by Zhang Ye’s ex-colleague, famed broadcast host from Beijing Radio Station, Wang Xiaomei. She was with her university classmates, who all graduated as broadcast majors. Some of them worked in local television stations as hosts and some were radio announcers, while there was also one who was a DJ for live mini-events.

Wang Xiaomei suddenly called for a waitress. “Can you please switch on the television?”

“Sure.” The waitress immediately turned on the the television and it showed Central TV Department 1’s channel, which was usually the default channel that many televisions would switch on to.

Onscreen, Zhang Ye was currently introducing the coaches.

A man asked, “Xiaomei, you still watch talent shows?”

Wang Xiaomei laughed. “I’m just curious.”

A woman blinked and asked, “What are you curious about?”

Wang Xiaomei replied, “I want to see how exactly Zhang Ye would host a talent show.”

A bearded man said, “How else can he host it? I’ve also done a similar program before, so don’t even talk about it. Being a host in such a program is really torturous. It’s like you don’t exist at all. Whether you’re onstage or off, it’s always very awkward. All you do is make announcements and present the advertising messages. What else can you do?”

“Yeah, that’s right.”

“It’s the same whoever does it.”

Wang Xiaomei plainly replied, “That might not be true. As I’ve

been colleagues with Zhang Ye before, I do know him a little better than most people. If it were any other host doing this show, they really might be just a supporting cast member and do things like only making the announcements. But that doesn't apply to Zhang Ye. He's not the type who would just take a step back and be in a supporting role. Mhm. But I still don't know how he will do this, because just like you all said, for these talent shows, there really isn't much for a host to show what they can do."

The woman said, "There's simply nothing to bring to bear. It's just making announcements and reading advertising lines. It can't be that he plans to say those things for the entire show, can he?"

The bearded man said, "Xiaomei, aren't you putting Zhang Ye on too high a pedestal? We're all in the business of hosting and our standards are all about the same. It's just that Zhang Ye has the added advantage of being more talented in literature. That's why he can achieve so much just within a year. If we're just talking about basic hosting skills, then all of us here wouldn't be worse than him."

Laughing, another person chimed in, "That's true."

The man with the short hair, leaning against the door, said, "We're all proper graduates of broadcasting, so how much difference can there be between our standards? Central TV went to look for Zhang Ye and not someone else because Zhang Ye has program planning skills. It wasn't because of his hosting abilities. If we're talking about pure hosting abilities, then with so many hosts at Central TV, would they lack his abilities at all? So it's not like a talent show like this would miss his presence either. If you

put me there instead of him, I can say the same things too, and I might even do it better than him.”

“Hur hur, who doesn’t know how to read advertising messages?” the bearded man said.

The woman mocked, “If you can’t even say an advertising message well, then you better not work in this business!”

On TV, Zhang Ye was standing in the center of the stage.

“Hello, everyone. I am your host, Zhang Ye.”

“Today, we have eight people who will be joining us onstage. Who could they be? What kinds of voices will they have? What songs will they choose to perform? Alright, next up, is the segment that is the most, most anticipated—advertisements!”

At the table, the bearded man who was drinking his water suddenly spewed it all out.

Pfft!

Why would I be anticipating advertisements!

Just before everyone was about to make fun of what Zhang Ye had said on TV, a scene that would shock these professional broadcast majors and the entire world’s citizens began!

On the television screen, Zhang Ye took a deep breath. “I-will-not-accept-any-gifts-this-year The-only-gift-I-will-accept-is-Brain Gold There’s-no-need-to-watch-any-TV-shows-this-year The-only-TV-show-you-need-to-watch-is-The Voice The-authentic-health-product The-authentic-The Voice Welcome-to-the-broadcast-of-The Voice of China-brought-to-you-exclusively-by-our-title-sponsor-leader-in-health-products-Brain Gold Drink-Mount Zhou Mineral Water-to-show-your-support-for-The Voice The-most-favored-student-of-the-four-coaches-for-this-season-of-The Voice-will-get-a-chance-to-join-Mount Zhou Mineral Water’s Music Dreams Tour Text-to-support-your-favorite-singers-and-you’ll-get-a-50-yuan-book-voucher-from-EveryRead.net We-thank-EveryRead.net-for-their-generous-support-of-our-singers-of-The Voice For-any-of-our-contestants-as-long-as-they-get-acknowledged-by-at-least-three-coaches-they’ll-win-a-10,000-yuan-Music Dreams Scholarship Sponsored-by-Brain Gold. We-also-give-our-thanks-to-Beijing Dahua Hotel-for-sponsoring-the-accommodations-for-the coaches-of-The Voice of China!”

Wang Xiaomei was dumbfounded!

The bearded man was dumbfounded!

The short-haired man who was grabbing some food with his chopsticks was dumbfounded!

The waitress who had just entered the private room to refill the drinks for the customers was astounded and looked at the television, also dumbfounded by it!

“Oh my god!”

“Damn!”

“This!”

Everyone present were all dumbfounded by this!

You’re too damn fast at speaking!

Were you on f**king stimulants!?

How many seconds was that? That was even done in a single breath! You actually recited that entire chunk of advertising messages without a cue card or missing a word, and they were even spoken clearly??

The waitress couldn’t help but say, “Isn’t that amazing?” After refilling their drinks, she doubled up and ran out, telling anyone she saw, “Quick, go and watch The Voice! The host is awesome!”

Awesome?

Was it only just awesome?

In the private room, Wang Xiaomei and the others were all speechless. As broadcast hosts themselves, they had all learned

these basic skills like off-script speed reading as well as crosstalk speed recital, all to practice their reading skills. But there was surely a limit to people, and this limit was more or less the same for everyone. There shouldn't be too much of a fluctuation in their standards, even the most able person they met in school could only read a script of 100 words at a rate of 6 words per second and that already amazed them. It was a speed that would leave them in the dust!

But Zhang Ye?

This advertising message of Zhang Ye's?

He probably managed more than 10 words per second!!

This was more than twice the speed of the fastest recital they'd ever heard of before today!

When this statistic was actually calculated, the difference was obvious. Awesome? This was no longer just awesome! This was crazy! This was a crushing blow to all the hosts in the country, and possibly, even those from overseas!

Wang Xiaomei didn't know whether to laugh or cry. She had guessed the outcome correctly, but not the process. She suddenly said, "This reading speed, is there anyone else in the hosting world who can do it?"

The woman took a deep breath and said, "Impossible!"

Another woman agreed, “It’s definitely impossible!”

The bearded man, still bitterly smiling, said, “Other than him, there’s definitely no one else who can do it!”

“F**k!” The short-haired man suddenly cursed. “Is Zhang Ye still human!?”

Just a while ago, they were still joking around and making fun of him.

Anyone could do it?

Say the advertising messages for the entire show?

Zhang Ye only got the hosting job because of his program planning ability?

All of them were proper graduates in broadcasting and there wouldn’t be much difference in their standards?

Thinking about what they had just said, they all turned red with embarrassment. This was a hosting job that no one else could do! He had actually goddamn created something new out of reciting advertising messages! It was not because of the advantage he had for program planning that he got the job as a host in Central TV. In the field of professional hosting, there were those who were on a

similar level, but there were also those who were much better!

Just as with Zhang Ye's speaking abilities, no one else could do what he did!

This was Zhang Ye's debut program in Central TV and also this first time being the host of such a grand stage. But in this debut performance, he had taught those hosts and industry insiders who doubted him a lesson. Just with this unique ability of his—and the resume he had from the time he hosted at the local and online television stations—it was enough to put him among the top hosts in the country. No one could deny that!

What a great Zhang Ye!

So it was them who were the frogs in the well!

At this moment, Wang Xiaomei's university classmates, who a while ago were still disapproving of the talent show Zhang Ye was hosting, felt depressed for the first time about why they were still at the lower echelons of the industry trying to make things work and not able to move up onto the level of hosting at a satellite channel, while Zhang Ye had already planted his feet firmly in Central TV Department 1!

The difference was in their talent?

No, that was not it!

Just comparing the basic skills in broadcasting, they were all far behind Zhang Ye!

Chapter 680 – Into The Ranks Of The Top Hosts!

Online.

The forums, Weibo, and Tieba were all in an uproar!

“Oh my god!”

“What’s happening?”

“What do you think is happening!? Quickly take a look at The Voice!”

“That Zhang guy is too godly!”

“F**k! Zhang Ye has already surpassed the gods!”

“It’s too amazing!”

“It’s blinding my titanium alloy dog eyes!”¹

“What sort of reciting speed was that!”

“These are advertisements that we’re talking about! My blood was actually boiling with excitement because of advertisements!”

“This is a talent show! But Zhang Ye’s hosting quite literally stole the limelight!”

“Who says that the host of The Voice will only be a supporting role? That anyone can do it? That it would be the same whoever becomes the host? Will the person who said that please stand up! I promise I won’t beat you to death!”

“I don’t know what the later segments are going to be like, but even if its rubbish or the contestants are all worthless, I think the viewership ratings of The Voice won’t be lower than 0.6%! With Zhang Ye’s shocking performance, it is as good as saving the world all by himself! It’s like I can hear Zhang Ye telling us—even if The Voice is a shitty program, he alone would still pull up the viewership ratings using that eloquent mouth of his as usual!”

“The godlike Zhang Ye! The godlike host!”

Besides the netizens’ exclamations, the industry insiders were also collectively shocked!

Some of Zhang Ye’s friends also posted on Weibo.

Peking University Chinese department’s teacher, Su Na: “...”

Yao Jiancai commented on The Voice’s promotional channel on Weibo: “I don’t usually curse, honestly, but after watching my Old Bro Zhang reciting those advertising messages, I can only say this

—holy f*ck! The Voice of China? I don't think it would be unsuitable even if the name is changed to The Tongue of China!"

Central Radio Station's Tian Bin: "Zhang Ye used the incredible speed in his speech to defeat all the hosts in the world! OH! OH! OH!"

Zhang Ye's former leader, Zhao Guozhou, posted on Weibo: "I was just dining out with some friends. When we heard Zhang Ye's advertising messages, my friends and I were all shocked. Nobody could say anything for a long time until a friend beside me, who owns a company, asked me, 'Do you think I will still be able to purchase advertising rights on The Voice?'"

Beijing Television's Hu Fei: "Today, Zhang Ye has shown us that advertisements can actually be done in such a way! Zhang Ye is incredibly outstanding! Although I'm working at Beijing Television Station, if I had to choose the most outstanding host with the best overall abilities in the country, my vote would definitely go to Zhang Ye!"

Weiwo Online Television Station's Feng Guiqin: "If, let's say as of yesterday, Zhang Ye wasn't in the top ranks of the hosting industry because he did not have the experience of hosting on a satellite channel, then today, there is clearly a spot for Zhang Ye in the country's top hosts club!"

Wang Xiong: "He is a host who keeps on creating miracles!"

Xiao Lu: "Teacher Zhang, I have knelt because of you!"

Dafei: “I’m also kneeling...on the keyboard!”

Hou Ge: “...\$\$##%...(^&*;...\$#@! !”

It was very lively on the internet. After a lot of people watched The Voice’s advertisement segment, they could not help but take out their cell phones or type on their keyboards to post the word “f**k” to express their astonishment towards Zhang Ye’s eloquent mouth! At the same time, everyone’s expectations for The Voice suddenly went through the roof. Everyone was exclaiming out loud even before the show had reached its main event. What would happen when the main show started?

Many people were informing their family and friends!

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In an alleyway.

A young woman was about to go to the bathroom when she met a neighbor.

“Zhen Zi, what are you doing?”

I was just taking a stroll.”

“What are you still strolling for, quickly go back home to watch

The Voice!”

“Why should I watch that? Didn’t everyone say that the program isn’t good?”

“Aiya, you’ll understand after you watch it! Zhang Ye is awesome! He has brought advertising to new heights!”

“What? Advertisements?”

“That’s right, advertisements!”

“Every time there are advertisements, I change the channel. Why would I want to listen to that?””

“You’ll understand when you hear it! I guarantee that you will definitely not change channels!”

“Really? Then I better go have a look!”

“You won’t be able to see it anymore now. Just wait for the rerun or check online for the clips later! Or you could play it back on your DVR too!”

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In a district, in a house.

A plump boy was making some calls in an excited manner.

“Hey, Big Liu, quickly switch on the television! The Voice is such a surprise!”

“It’s enjoyable to watch?”

“It’s so good that I’m crying!”

“Yo, which contestant sang so well?”

“The singing segment hasn’t even started yet.”

“Ah? Damn, then how is it so good you’re crying?!”

“You don’t shit! Quickly take a look! Why would I lie to you?!”

“Alright, I’ll believe you this time!”

Afterwards, the plump boy started to call up his other friends. He was not a hardcore fan of Zhang Ye and could not even be considered a fan before this as he had only seen a few of Zhang Ye’s works and poetry. But now, after Zhang Ye recited those earth-shaking advertising messages, the plump boy completely became Zhang Ye’s hardcore fan. He felt that Zhang Ye’s confident composure and presence onstage was damn full of swag. His charm was there for all to see!

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The same scenes were happening everywhere in the country.

If the stage setup and opening theme of The Voice were good but not enough to shock everyone, then Zhang Ye's lines would have surely done the job!

The news spread—

—by word of mouth!

The people who watched the broadcast were all scrambling to spread the news!

Immediately, more and more people gathered in front of their television and switched the channel to Central TV Department 1!

“It should be the time for the contestants to appear?”

“Hai, I really want to see Zhang Ye recite the advertising messages again! Pfft! I suddenly feel like I'm really cheap! In the past, I couldn't wait to switch channels when the advertisements came on! But now, I actually want to hear it several times more!”

“Haha, it's the same for me!”

“I love you so much, Teacher Zhang Ye!”

“I wonder what the upcoming segments will be like?! What kind of contestants could Zhang Ye and his team gather in this short period of time? Besides, everyone has been criticizing The Voice’s main feature of not judging looks or occupation. This is definitely a big problem. A talent show full of ugly men and women? Will that really be a feature to look forward to? Will that really be something marketable? Even if the contestants sing well, how good will they be? They can’t possibly be better than those people professionally trained in music, right? A slogan which emphasizes not on judging by occupation seems to already indicate that The Voice won’t purposely go and search for people trained musically, They also don’t require contestants to be professionally trained in singing or have looks or be tall. Is this really not going to be a problem at all?”

“Hai, who knows?”

“I also don’t feel optimistic about the contestants’ segment, although I admit that the opening was very exciting! But that excitement was solely because of Zhang Ye’s ability and charm!”

“I believe that Zhang Ye will always bring me surprises! We still have to see how the show will be executed!”

“Hey, it’s starting, it’s starting!”

“The first contestant’s intro clip is playing!”

“Whoa, why is that woman so fat?!”

“F**k, they’re really not going to judge by looks?”

“Will she be able to sing well?”

“Her type of singing does not seem like it will be good!”

Chapter 681 – Creating A Sensation!

At 9:10 PM.

Chenchen's form teacher, Zhao Mei, was at home watching television together with her boyfriend.

Her boyfriend said, "Zhang Ye's mouth is quite formidable. Is he really a relative of one of your students?"

"Of course, didn't I tell you before?" Zhao Mei said, "Zhang Ye has come to our school so many times that our grade's class teachers are already very familiar with him."

Her boyfriend said, "What is he like? Is he a troublemaker as the media reports him to be?"

Zhao Mei shook her head. "No, he's quite a nice person and doesn't put on any airs."

The two of them were chatting when suddenly, the intro clip of The Voice's first contestant appeared on screen: "My name is Luo Yu and I'm a physical education teacher at a primary school. Since I was young until now, my classmates, friends, and colleagues all call me 'Raspy Luo.' Each time I sing, people around me intentionally or unintentionally avoid me. No one has thought that I know how to sing or feels that my singing is good. Today, I would like to use the stage of The Voice to prove myself. I want to let everyone know that a fat person also has dreams. No matter what people say about me, all I want to do is sing!"

The intro clip ended!

The first contestant held a microphone and stood onstage.

However, Zhao Mei was stunned when she saw this on television. Suddenly, she rose and exclaimed, “Teacher Luo! It’s Teacher Luo!”

Her boyfriend who also knew Little Luo said, “This...isn’t this your school’s P.E. teacher, Luo Yu? What the heck! How did she end up on The Voice!?”

Zhao Mei could not believe what she saw. “I don’t know!”

At the same time, many of the other Beijing Experimental Primary School teachers who were also watching The Voice were dumbfounded. They even thought they were mistaken!

“It’s Luo Yu!”

“It’s really Little Luo!”

“Why did Teacher Luo go and join a singing competition?”

“My god! Did they get it wrong!? That lousy voice of Little Luo, even her normal speaking voice is raspy. How could she sing!”

“Who knows!”

“Little Luo’s too brave!”

“Damn, Teacher Luo really isn’t afraid of losing face!”

Some of the teachers even called each other when they saw this.

“Hello, Zhao Mei, quick, go and watch Central TV Department 1!”

“I’m watching it right now, it’s Teacher Luo!”

“Aiyo, what’s going on? Do you know?”

“I remember that day at the school field. Teacher Zhang seemed to be looking for Teacher Luo, but I don’t know what happened after that! I don’t know what’s going on now either! Teacher Luo’s voice...”

At this moment, many of the students of Experimental Primary School and their parents were also staring at Central TV Department 1’s channel with their eyes and mouths wide open. They all recognized her!

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The TV now showed the audience. They all appeared very indifferent, like they did not have an interest in what was happening.

Then the cameras focused on the four coaches.

Zhang Yuanqi: “Doesn’t look too good, does it?”

Chen Guang: “I don’t know.”

The musical introduction started, then the sound of the guitars and drums suddenly exploded!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand lyrics, composing, or singing!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand comfort, laughter, or living!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand passion, women, or romance!

“I’ve always been told I don’t understand restraint, flexibility, or smarts!”

Listening up to here, Zhao Mei was already stunned!

Zhao Mei's boyfriend was also so astonished that his eyes were like saucers!

Including many of Luo Yu's colleagues from the school, all of them were shaken at this moment. "This, this was sung by Teacher Luo?"

Suddenly, Luo Yu's voice erupted!

"Who told you I can't sing!

"Who told you I don't understand living!

"Who told you I can't be cruel!

"Who told you I don't know glory!"

That screaming was a punch to everyone's gut!

Zhao Mei exclaimed excitedly, "So awesome! Little Luo is really awesome!"

Her boyfriend also exclaimed, "They turned! All four coaches have turned!"

A language teacher who was teaching the same grade as Luo Yu nearly jumped up at this when she was watching the show at

home. “My god! “Holy shit!”

A little boy from a class Luo Yu taught was stunned as he watched his physical education teacher performing in the glamor of the limelight. His face expressed his shock as if he did not know who the singer was!

When the principal and several other school leaders of Experimental Primary School received this news from some of their school’s teachers, they immediately switched on their television to see. The moment they heard Luo Yu singing “Who Told You I Don’t Understand,” they were also left stunned. They knew Luo Yu all too well. She was the odd one out among the teachers, always randomly singing on the playground or the hallways and irritating many people doing so. Once, the principal even asked to see her in the office to reprimand her stop singing, telling her that her voice was really terrible to listen to!

But then, was it actually terrible to listen to?

Thinking about it now, they realized that they had never seriously listened to Luo Yu’s singing before. Maybe it was because they felt that her appearance did not fit singing, that her raspy voice made her destined not to sing, so whenever she sang any song, they did not bother to truly listen or lay their eyes on her. Until today. Until they sat in front of their TVs and concentrated on listening to Luo Yu perform and paid attention to her voice did they discover that actually...actually Teacher Luo really knew how to sing!

All of a sudden, Luo Yu’s cell phone exploded with calls. Her

relatives and friends were all calling to ask!

“Teacher Luo!”

“Little Luo, what’s going on?”

“Little Yu, why were you on television?”

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The Internet also exploded with comments from the netizens!

“Oh my god!”

“This voice is the be-all, end-all!”

“This fat woman is awesome! Is she really a P.E. teacher?”

“Where did Zhang Ye find such a great contestant!”

“Who says that if you’re ugly, you won’t attract people? Who says that The Voice’s contestants are all just amateurs? That their singing won’t be good?”

“I’ve always thought that I wouldn’t be able to accept non-good-looking people on a talent show, that’s why I did not have much anticipation for The Voice. But today I’ve realized I was wrong,

because when a person sings a song with all their heart, the charm they exude is able to cover up everything else! I really like this P.E. teacher a lot!”

“The coaches are unable to see their faces and can only hear their voice. Such cool design!”

“So this is what The Voice is like!”

“How face smacking!”

“Yeah, Zhang Ye slapped everyone’s faces!”

“Does she have to sing it so breathtakingly!?”

“It’s only the first contestant to appear and the bar is already set so high?”

Onscreen, the fighting for the contestant part had begun. The coaches were all fighting each other for the contestant to join their teams. Chen Guang and Fan Wenli, the ideal couple who had a “great battle,” made everyone shout excitedly!

“Hahahaha!”

“How funny is that!”

“Fan Wenli was so funny!”

“So they could even take contestants in this way!?”

“I’ve never before seen such a talent show contestant selection!”

“Ah, she chose Chen Guang!”

“Zhang Ye has really brought this program to life with its segments!”

Some people were already starting to “@” their friends on Weibo: “Quick, watch The Voice. It’s exciting! It’s totally unlike what all the analysis and rumors said it to be!”

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The second contestant appeared!

“Wow!”

“He’s a train driver?”

“He’s singing so emotionally!”

“Oh god, I don’t know what to say anymore!”

“It’s another great contestant!”

Then the next contestant.

“A housewife?”

“Not bad at all!”

“I like her, I like her!”

“How have we never known that there were so many talented people among the common folk?”

“Ah, the coaches have turned!”

The fourth contestant.

The fifth contestant.

The seventh contestant.

The audience were also watching in anticipation. Soon, it was time for the last contestant to perform!

However, this contestant was not introduced like the others. In

the intro clip, the contestant could not be seen at all. It was simply a silhouette. Then a voice-over done by one of the staff members said: “Our last contestant for today has a most unique voice. Will the coaches be able to accept this voice? Let us find out together.”

The contestant went on stage.

The cameras switched to the faces of the coaches, with their backs facing the stage which couldn't be seen clearly. On it was a very obscure figure of a person making it feel very mysterious.

“What’s the meaning of this?”

“What’s with this person?”

“I don’t know.”

“Let’s listen and find out.”

The melody began and the voice drifted out!

“When will the moon be clear and bright?

“With a cup of wine in my hand, I ask the clear sky.

“In the heavens on this night,

“I wonder what season it would be?

“I’d like to ride the wind to fly home.

“Yet I fear the crystal and jade mansions

“are much too high and cold for me.

“Dancing with my moonlit shadow,

“it does not seem like the human world.”

The people in front of their televisions were all engrossed listening!

“How beautiful, this woman’s voice is too beautiful!”

“It has to be the best voice of today!”

“What an elegant sounding voice!”

“I’m getting drunk listening to it!”

“With a voice like that, it must be a beautiful woman!”

“Listen to that magnetic charm and the emotions in the singing. I

guess it must be a beautiful woman in her 30s! Why isn't the camera showing her yet! Quick, focus on her!"

This was a huge tease, as all of the people could not wait any longer to find out the face behind the voice!

At this moment, on TV, Chen Guang instantly hit the button and turned around!

Along with the coach turning, the camera angles were cut together like they too were from the point of view of the coaches. It cut to the contestant who then appeared on the TVs!

With this, when the people watching the program on television saw the contestant, a lot of them screamed with shock. Some of them jumped up from their chairs or sofas like they had touched an electric current!

"Ah!"

"Oh my god!"

"It's a man!"

"F**k, it's a man!"

"This song was sung by a man? A man??"

“That outfit, I think he should be a laborer?”

Without any despising looks or mocking laughter, when faced with this revelation of shockingly great contrast, all the people watching suddenly screamed in front of their TVs!

“I have goosebumps all over my body!”

“This is so nice to listen to! It’s great!”

“Awesome! Too damn awesome!”

“Is there anything more unbelievable than that!?”

“I just want to say this now. Zhang Ye, you’ve won! You’ve goddamn won!”

“Yes! Zhang Ye has won! He has totally amazed me!”

“I’ve realized that I’ve fallen for this program already!”

Qian Pingfan finished his performance.

Whether it was on television or outside of it, none of the audience could maintain their calm!

.....

Beijing.

A barbeque shop near Lishuiqiao.

A person pointed at the TV with his eyes wide and mouth agape. “I know that person! I know him! He’s the one who repairs bicycles in front of the station!”

The person sitting opposite him said, “Are you serious?”

A woman said, “You must’ve seen wrong?”

That person said, “Impossible! He has repaired my bicycle twice for me!”

As it turned out, when the coaches interviewed Qian Pingfan onscreen, he revealed his occupation!

“He’s really a bicycle repairman?”

“ ... ”

“I have nothing I can say to that!”

“How could a bicycle repairman sing that well!”

“This program is going to get popular!”

“I really take my hats off to Zhang Ye!”

“This is the most surprising program I’ve watched this year!”

“This is what a real singing talent show should be in my mind!”

“For those who were waiting to see Zhang Ye make a joke of himself, denounced him and The Voice of China, I wonder what their expressions are like now?!”

“That might not be for sure yet, it will still depend on the viewership ratings!”

Chapter 682 – Yet Another Record Breaking High!

In the vicinity of Central TV.

At a rather good restaurant.

The restaurant's operating hour was actually only up until 9 PM, or at most extended until 9:30 PM for closing down. But now it was already past 10 PM and the restaurant was still open. There were even four tables of guests being served inside. As the owner of the restaurant and Jiang Yuan knew each other—and with this being the restaurant of choice for Central TV Department 1's events, with many years of business connections—, if Jiang Yuan asked, the restaurant would definitely make an exception for them.

“Everyone, have a seat!”

“There's no space left over here.”

“There's still a table over there, if that's not enough, we can set up another table.”

“Waiter, please serve the food and alcohol. Beer and wine!”

Around 30 people were here. Other than Jiang Yuan, there were the program team staff of The Voice as well as those staff members who were temporarily transferred from other program teams to

help out with the production. Although they did not officially belong to The Voice's team, they had still contributed a lot to it. Since it was a celebratory banquet, then it was only natural that all those involved should attend!

There were two television sets in the restaurant and both were currently switched on and tuned in to The Voice. The show was only halfway through broadcasting when they made their way here for the feast. Since the recording and the post-production was all done, the rest of the broadcast would be handled by the relevant people in Central TV Department 1. The work for Zhang Ye and his team was over for the day, so they could relax a little. Everyone had worked until they were exhausted over the past few days!

The food had not yet been served, but the alcohol was.

A few interns were fighting to pour the liquor for the others.

Zhang Ye raised his glass. "I propose that we make a toast to Director Jiang first."

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest stood up one after another, while a few other women who were not drinkers also symbolically poured themselves a little beer as they all toasted, "To Director Jiang!"

Jiang Yuan stood up and held up his hands to try to stop them. "The first toast should not be for me. Logically, the first toast should be given to Teacher Zhang Ye. If not for him, Central TV would not have this show today. If not for him working day and

night, even living in the studio, The Voice could not have possibly made it in time for the broadcast. This is the celebratory feast for your team and you guys are the leads. So I must insist that first toast be given to Teacher Zhang!”

Zhang Ye declined, “Director Jiang, that won’t do.”

“Come.” Jiang Yuan raised his glass and said, “A toast to you.”

“Don’t, don’t.” Zhang Ye said, not daring to accept this honor, “Let me toast you.”

In the end, everyone just toasted to Jiang Yuan and Zhang Ye together.

Then, Jiang Yuan said, “Teacher Zhang, why don’t you make a short speech.”

Zhang Ye laughed, then looked at his subordinates. “First, let’s thank our director for his support. Without Director Jiang’s trust and support, we wouldn’t be here today.”

Jiang Yuan waved it off and just smiled.

“Next, I want to thank all of you,” Zhang Ye said sincerely. “Other than thank you, it’s still thank you. Thank you for trusting in me, sacrificing your sleep and rest for me and our show for the past several days. When other program teams work overtime, it’s because they are forced to, but not ours. Everyone did it willingly,

so when a few of our colleagues fell sick, I even had to push them to go home to rest, but they still stayed behind to help out, working while sick. I know that every one of you do it for me, because all of you trust me. I understand all of that. So I want to make a toast to all of you!”

They raised their glasses and clinked them together before drinking.

Everyone started talking.

“Director Zhang, don’t be so modest with us!”

“What’s the point of saying that?”

“Yeah, that was what we were supposed to do!”

“We’ll toast you!”

“Cheers!”

Zhang Ye’s sincere thanks from the bottom of his heart touched everyone. Thinking about those days of endless and tiresome work that couldn’t even be described, they felt lucky they managed to pull through. Under Zhang Ye’s leadership, they were now about to reap the great harvest they deserved!

Following that, everyone ate and drank.

“Aiya, the broadcast is almost finishing.”

“It’s time for Qian Pingfan to appear.”

“Haha, I bet everyone will be shocked by Little Qian!”

“Look, the comments on the Internet have exploded! They’re all discussing about our show!”

“Yeah, I just saw it too. Everyone has very good comments for us, especially the reading of the advertising message by Director Zhang at the beginning. That shocked so many people!”

“F**k, Luo Yu has already become famous. Just how long has it been since she appeared in the show? Fans have already created a Tieba for her! It even has several hundred members already. It’s going to cross 1000 soon!”

“Look at the Weibo headlines! They’re about us too!”

“So fast? Weren’t we just in fifth place?”

“We’re now first!”

“Aiyo, then we have to toast again!”

“Cheers!”

Beside Zhang Ye, Chenchen sat there expressionlessly. She slowly took some food with her chopsticks and put it onto her plate. The little one had been with Zhang Ye for the past several days, going to school in the morning and then being brought by Luo Yu back to the television station in the evening. She slept at Central TV together with Zhang Ye and did not get much rest, so she looked very tired right now and was also sullen and upset at Zhang Ye at the moment.

Zhang Zuo came over. “Director Zhang, I want to toast you for giving us a valuable lesson with your program planning!”

“Let me offer you a toast as well,” Ha Qiqi said. “When I first read your proposal back then, I did not think that it would work out at all. I believe many others felt the same way, but the results have proven that you were right, you saw further than any one of us, so let me offer you a toast.”

They clinked their glasses together. “Alright, don’t stand on ceremony anymore.”

Chenchen pouted. “Zhang Ye, drink less.”

“I know,” Zhang Ye casually replied.

A while later, someone else came to toast Zhang Ye again.

Zhang Ye did not reject anyone. “Come, cheers!”

Chenchen said unhappily, “Zhang Ye, drink less.”

Zhang Ye said, “How much have I drank? OK, OK, I will not drink so much.”

Ha Qiqi was very envious. “Look at Chenchen. She’s so sensible, knowing to tell you to have less to drink. If I had a daughter like that, how great would it be.”

Zhang Ye said, “Then you better be prepared for tough days ahead.”

Chenchen glared at Zhang Ye. “...Hur hur.”

At this moment, the broadcast of The Voice ended.

Jiang Yuan’s cell phone rang. When he saw the number, he went outside immediately to answer it. About five minutes later, Jiang Yuan walked in with a smile on his face. “I have some good news for everyone. I’ve just received an update three major online video hosting services have already contacted our station, hoping to get the exclusive rights to The Voice of China’s online broadcast. Among them, one offered a sky-high price to secure the contract, can you all guess how much it is?”

Zhang Ye’s contract with Central TV Department 1 was a little special. Other than Zhang Ye, Jiang Yuan and a few other people,

most did not know the details. Before he signed with Central TV Department 1, Zhang Ye had a condition that he would get to keep the copyright to The Voice. This applied more on any foreign exports of his show's format and the second or third seasons of The Voice, which meant that Zhang Ye could, on principle, move to another station with the right to reproduce his show there. It also meant that Central TV could not use the name and logo of The Voice of their own accord, though the first season of all such copyrights were provided to Central TV for free. For example, the television broadcast, the title sponsorship fee, the rights to stream the show via an online video hosting service, all of these deals would not be given to Zhang Ye at all and belonged fully to Central TV. This was the reason why Central TV Department 1 had agreed to the terms after a long round of discussions as it had saved them a big chunk of their budget!

Ha Qiqi blinked. "30 million?"

Zhang Zuo guessed, "45 million?"

Little Wang said, "Could it be 50 million?"

"You've all guessed wrong," Jiang Yuan said elatedly. "There's an online video hosting service that is offering us an 80 million RMB price to secure exclusive rights!"

"Ah?"

"80 million?"

“I’m gonna faint!”

“This...”

Everyone was surprised at this news. It had to be said that they were unable to sell the online exclusive rights all this time, not because no one would buy it but because all the offers so far did not satisfy Zhang Ye’s estimates. Some offered 20 million, some 10 million, and the highest offer was only 25 million RMB. But like for those advertising rights quotes, Zhang Ye did not step back on the prices and maintained a minimum base cost. Zhang Ye would rather hold them in hand than to take a lower price, and because of this matter, the station had also talked to Zhang Ye on several occasions, though he did not waver at all!

However, looking at it now, Zhang Ye had once again proven the brilliance of his strategy!

Jiang Yuan was also celebrating in his mind, thinking how lucky it was that the station did not overwrite Zhang Ye and sell off the online exclusive rights and advertising rights fee for cheap, otherwise, they would have suffered an enormous loss. It was a good thing that they listened to Zhang Ye!

80 million RMB!

The Voice’s production fees were only over 100 million, which was more or less covered by the title sponsorship already. So that meant they didn’t make any losses or profit from there. Thereafter, once the remaining advertising rights fees and

exclusive rights were sold, this would all become pure profit for Central TV Department 1!

What kind of a concept was a net gain of 80 million? Even if Central TV Department 1 were to combine a full 24 hours of shows on a Thursday, a total of more than a dozen programs such as drama series and interview programs, they wouldn't be able to earn 80 million per season. But with just one show from Zhang Ye, he managed to do it; he made The Voice earn more than the total combined output of more than a dozen programs added together, and this did not even include the unsold advertising rights fees yet. Just calculating it like that, it would be enough to scare anyone!

Besides, getting an 80 million RMB copyright sold for an exclusive online broadcast was the highest amount in the industry. Not only was it the most for the current ongoing programs, but it's also the most in the history of all programs. No other variety show had ever gotten an exclusive online broadcast fee of more than 60 million! But now Zhang Ye had rewritten the records for China's variety world and increased it by 20 million!

This was crazy!

Central TV was crazy!

The Voice's program team was crazy!

The entire television industry was crazy!

After the records of the title sponsorship and the production budget, The Voice of China had once again broken and set a new record for a variety show!

Chapter 683 – The Night That Belonged To The Voice!

Online.

This news was exposed.

It wasn't leaked news, but the information was announced by the online video hosting service themselves. Their Vice President had directly announced this on Weibo to say that they were investing 80 million to purchase the exclusive online broadcast rights to The Voice of China, thus creating a gigantic wave!

“How exciting!”

“That much money?”

“Is The Voice really worth that amount?”

“Only one episode has been shown so far and they're already spending so much money to buy the rights? Am I crazy or has the world gone crazy? Isn't that too risky?”

“Yeah, they should at least wait for the viewership ratings to be released first!”

“If the viewership ratings released tomorrow show that it performed very well, then the might would be worth it. But if it's

not as high as expected, then their money will have gone to waste. Was there a need to rush like that? Couldn't they have waited another day? Did they have to buy it today no matter what?"

"That may not be it. If the viewership for The Voice goes through the roof and performs beyond expectations, then by tomorrow, 80 million would not even be able to secure the rights. There might even be more competition and they would not stand a chance to get it anymore. They probably tabled an irresistible offer to Central TV Department 1 that they could not resist, hoping to gain an advantage and betting on Zhang Ye and The Voice!"

"F**k, this is no longer a world I can understand!"

"Yeah, I don't understand it either. This is way too crazy!"

"Right now, no matter how the viewership ratings turn out, Zhang Ye has already come through with flying colors! He used his abilities to help Central TV Department 1 earn over 100 million! On top of that, it looks like The Voice does not only have those income streams, so it will definitely only get higher!"

"He's raking in a profit too quickly!"

"Even a gust of wind is not this quick!"

"I can only say 'comparison always ends up torturing people, comparison always ends up trashing products.' The other variety shows are all finding it difficult to meet their targets and have

always been struggling just to keep things moving along. As long as they don't lose money and be slightly in the black, they are satisfied. But what about The Voice? Zhang Ye had only just set up some stage, but he can still get people to throw their money at the show with his eyes closed! It's the same type of singing show, but why is there such a gulf in the gap! Looking at those other, pitiful singing variety shows, I don't have the heart to watch them anymore!"

"What's more, they were rushed to finish it to fill the slot!"

"Right, on top of that, Thursday night's slot isn't exactly a good time either!"

"Is that what Zhang Ye's true capabilities are like?"

The citizens were shocked!

The industry was in an uproar!

.....

At the restaurant.

Only Zhang Ye did not seem that surprised.

Jiang Yuan looked at him and said, "Little Zhang, what do you think of the offer?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “It’s OK.”

“Should we sell it?” Jiang Yuan wanted to hear his opinion.

Zhang Ye knew when he had to take a step back. “I will leave that to you and the leaders. Whatever the decision is, I will respect it, so anything is fine.” The offered amount was somewhat similar to Zhang Ye’s expectations. Back in his previous world, The Voice’s initial exclusive online broadcast rights were worth around 100 million, so this new offer here wasn’t that far off and not a big matter. Besides, he had to consider the market demand of this new world as well.

Jiang Yuan laughed, “Then we will sell it. You all can carry on eating, I will go back to handle this matter and find someone of the other party we can talk to regarding the contract.”

Zhang Ye said, “But we’ve only just started eating, you haven’t had much yet.”

Jiang Yuan said, “Previously, you were the one doing all the work. Now it’s my turn!” Before he left, Jiang Yuan looked at Zhang Ye and said, “Little Zhang, you’ve really helped Central TV Department 1 win back some vindication this time!”

Zhang Ye smiled blissfully. “Since Central TV has recruited me to join them, I definitely must do my best.”

Jiang Yuan nodded and then left.

Central TV Department 1 had always been somewhat average when it came to variety shows, and could even be said that it was already falling behind. Compared to many of the provincial satellite channels, they couldn't even compare anymore. But now, Zhang Ye's arrival had single-handedly helped them turn things around! In a instant, Central TV Department 1 had jumped into the lead from someplace in the middle pack! It was evident that Zhang Ye's capabilities were there, just like what some people had said of him before—this was truly a person who could work miracles! The only thing missing now was the finalized viewership ratings figure!

Just how much would it be?

Just how much could they get?

Jiang Yuan did not want to even venture a guess!

At this moment, Zhang Zuo's cell phone rang and he went outside to answer it. When he came back, he immediately reported to Zhang Ye about the situation, "Director Zhang, one of the advertisers contacted me about their interest to purchase the rights to a first-tier advertisement."

Zhang Ye asked, "How much are they offering?"

Zhang Zuo said, "I don't know, I haven't gotten a quote from them yet. How much do you think we should ask for?"

Zhang Ye said, “Was it one of those companies we were in discussions with before?”

“Yeah, it’s the executive of Heehee Dairy Industry, the one who met you in your office before.” Zhang Zuo said, “They’ve come back after all.”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Give them a quote of 4 million. The universal price for the first-tier advertising rights will be 4 million.”

Zhang Zuo asked, “Wasn’t it 3 million before? Surely they won’t agree if we ask for 4 million, right? Besides, we’ve already broadcast one episode, so that’s an episode less for their advertisements.”

Zhang Ye explained, “You can’t look at it that way. In the past, our show was not broadcast yet and not many people were optimistic about it. But now that it’s been so well received, the show will get popular because of that. The only question left is how popular it will get. Now that they’ve approached us again, the price will definitely have to be set by us. Even if it’s an episode fewer, the price will not remain the same as previously stated. Otherwise, if we keep it at 3 million and sell it to them, it would be unfair to the two companies who bought the first-tier advertising rights. They had risked uncertainty and spent 3 million on our program, but now that it has gotten popular, the other advertisers no longer face that risk, so how could the entry point for them still be 3 million? The difference is only an episode fewer of promotions? Do you think those who signed with us at the

beginning would be happy? Would it be fair to them?”

Zhang Zuo nodded his head firmly. “That’s true!”

Zhang Ye said, “We will stick to this new pricing, so for the second and third tiers of advertising rights, raise them by one-third too. You don’t have to worry that nobody will buy them!”

“Alright.” Zhang Zuo understood.

At this time, Ha Qiqi also remembered the day the advertisers came to Zhang Ye’s office to discuss the advertisements but did not come to an agreement. After they had left, Zhang Ye told Ha Qiqi and the others that those companies would come to rue their decisions that day. As it turned out, Zhang Ye’s words really came true!

The celebratory banquet finished rather quickly.

In the end, during the second half of the dinner and after some seven or eight calls, the unsellable advertisements for The Voice had all been bought at a 30 to 40% higher price than previously, even when the contractual terms remained the same! All sold out in 20 minutes!

That demand was too explosive!

The feeling was like they were all snapped up as if they didn’t cost money!

After the contracts were verbally agreed upon over the phone, some of the advertisers who were still not feeling assured immediately sent over their lawyers and representatives to Central TV with the contracts to get them signed. They were afraid that The Voice would be recording its second episode very soon, and if they did not get the contract settled early, they might get delayed in the involvement of the second episode and miss out on another chance at publicity. Additionally, they knew that there were limited advertising spots, so if anyone came ahead of them, then they might miss out on the entire opportunity altogether!

In just the blink of an eye, another 20 million RMB had entered Central TV's accounts!

Along with these advertisers, there were many other companies that approached them; some wanted to get the rights to exclusive interviews and some entertainment companies expressed their interest to sign certain contestants. Zhang Ye did not need to deal with all these himself and just left them for Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo to handle, while some decisions they couldn't make on the program team level were redirected straight to Central TV Department 1!

.....

Lishuiqiao.

At a certain rented apartment.

Qian Pingfan's master, who taught him how to repair bicycles, held him by his shoulders tightly. "Good kid, you were really great!"

Qian Pingfan scratched his head and said, "Master, I don't wish to repair bicycles in the future any longer, is that OK?"

"You're still thinking of repairing bicycles?" His master laughed. "Just continue singing your songs well! Don't embarrass me!"

Unknowingly, Qian Pingfan's eyes turned teary. "Master!"

.....

Luo Yu's home.

After Luo Yu answered a call, she made several calls. Suddenly, she cried out wildly, "Dad! Mom!!"

"What's the matter?" Her parents came running to her.

Luo Yu was almost unable to speak. "I...I...They...There's a management agency that wants to sign me! They want to sign me as a singer!"

Mother Luo was surprised. "What?"

Father Luo couldn't hide his happiness. "Really? Is that true?"

Luo Yu was tearing up. "It's true! It was Teacher Chen Guang's agency that wanted to sign me. I-I've already verified it with Teacher Chen Guang! It was he who recommended me to his company! Then when I called Teacher Zhang Ye, he told me to wait a little longer and not rush to sign. He said that if I signed now, the terms of the contract would only be so-so. Teacher Zhang offered to help me speak to Teacher Chen's agency after the competition is halfway through so that he can fight for the best contract terms for me!"

Sign a contract? Mother Luo hugged her daughter tightly when she heard that. "My god! My daughter is going to be a singer!"

Tears streamed down Luo Yu's face as she cried, "Dad! Mom! I didn't let you all down after all! I, I didn't embarrass the two of you!"

.....

A lot of people's destinies were changed because of The Voice!

A lot of people's hearts were thumping for The Voice!

On this Thursday evening, the night belonged to The Voice of China! Countless people were screaming for The Voice! Countless people were going crazy for The Voice!

Chapter 684 – The End!

The next day.

At 8 AM in the morning, a cool wind was blowing on the streets.

After a good night's sleep, the first thing Zhang Ye did when he woke up was bring Chenchen to Caishikou. He drove into the district where his parents' home was and randomly parked his car in the not too large open space below their apartment.

“Let's go.” Zhang Ye unbuckled his seatbelt.

“OK.” Chenchen was still playing on Zhang Ye's cell phone, tapping here and there on it in a game.

Zhang Ye urged her, “Come on, we're already here.”

Only then did Chenchen slowly get out of the car.

“Don't keep playing on my phone until there's no battery. I still have to take calls,” Zhang Ye said.

Zhang Ye had taken the day off today, or rather, more than half of The Voice's program team had been give the day off. This was specially approved by the station. After having been kept tremendously busy for two weeks without rest, now that the first episode had been successfully completed, they definitely had to

have some time off to recharge and rest. After all, there had to be a balance between work and relaxation. If they actually had to work continuously for three months without a single day of rest, who could take it? That would end up affecting their work negatively instead.

In the district, a few elderly neighbors were already up and going to their morning exercises.

Grandma Cui waved from afar. “Little Ye, you’re back?”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Ai, Grandma Cui, how have you been?”

“Rather good, rather good.” Grandma Cui said excitedly, “Our whole family was watching your show last night. It was very enjoyable to watch, the show was great!”

Zhang Ye said happily, “Oh, you have my gratitude.”

Grandpa Li who was just stretching his arm warming up said kindly, “Everyone is talking about your show now. Are the viewership ratings out yet?”

Zhang Ye said, “Not yet.”

Auntie Chen asked, “When will it be released?”

Zhang Ye replied, “It’s not definite. I’m also waiting for it.”

Grandma Cui said, “All the best then. Our neighbors are all supporting you. We even switched on both TVs at home yesterday and tuned them to Central TV Department 1’s channel, hur hur.”

“I did that at my place too!”

“We must support Little Ye’s shows!”

Zhang Ye immediately thanked all his elders before finally bringing Chenchen into the building.

On the way up, Zhang Ye reminded, “Chenchen, when you see them later, remember to greet them as Grandpa and Grandma, understand?”

As Chenchen climbed up the stairs while playing on the cell phone, she said, “OK.”

“OK, that’s enough. Stop playing and return my phone to me.” Zhang Ye snatched it back from her.

Chenchen was not having any of that. “Zhang Ye, give it back to me! Give it back!”

Zhang Ye put it back into his pocket. “You’ve already played for the whole morning, rest your eyes.”

Chenchen said, “Zhang Ye, I want to play awhile more.”

“No.” Zhang Ye avoided her just as they came to the house.

Before he could even knock, the door opened and his mother appeared behind the security door. “I could hear you talking to Grandma Cui from up here. Is this your landlord’s kid?”

Zhang Ye pulled Chenchen into the house. “Yes, she’s Rao Chenchen.” He saw his father and waved to him. “Dad.”

His father nodded back and then also came over to look at Chenchen. “Whoa, such a beautiful child?”

When Chenchen saw Zhang Ye’s parents, she greeted them, “Grandpa, Grandma.”

His mother was already smiling widely. “This child is really cute, she looks just like a porcelain doll.”

“But her nature is like a chihuahua.” Zhang Ye added, “The two of you better not take her to be like any other child. She’s shrewd like an adult.”

His mother did not like him saying that. “Heh, what chihuahua? How can you say that. What a good child. Come here Chenchen. Have you eaten breakfast? No? Let Grandma prepare something

for you.”

Chenchen said in her childish voice, “Thank you, Grandma.”

“No need to thank me at all.” His mother liked her greatly and kept looking at her. “What a pretty child. Little Ye, you better hurry up and find a partner so that your father and I can have a grandson, well, a granddaughter would be good too.”

Zhang Ye slumped onto the sofa listlessly. “OK, OK, OK.”

Chenchen suddenly asked, “Grandma, do you have a cell phone?”

His mother asked curiously, “Yes, why?”

Chenchen said, “I want to play on it.”

Zhang Ye’s eyes widened. “Don’t give it to her. She has been secretly playing on my phone for two hours since I woke up.”

But his mother said, “Kids this age always play, it’s fine. Come here, Grandma will give you her phone.”

Chenchen took it from here and immediately found a chair to sit on and started playing.

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, “You’ll spoil her.”

His mother said, “It’s just for a while, what are you scared of?”

His father asked, “How have you been? Your mom and I were watching The Voice last night. I don’t really get it but your mom keeps saying it’s great.”

When this topic was brought up, his mother’s attention was perked. “With that intelligence of yours, what will you understand? How can this program not be nice to watch? It’s so good that even I want to go and join the competition. Those contestants were each singing better than the other, especially that Qian Pingfan. His voice was be-all, end-all!”

Zhang Ye laughed. “My show isn’t too bad, right?”

“It’s too good! How’re the viewership ratings?” His mother asked.

“It’s not out yet, I’m guessing they will announce it in the afternoon,” Zhang Ye said.

His mother joyfully said, “Alright, let me prepare breakfast for you and Chenchen. We’ll talk about it again after eating.”

Zhang Ye said, “Quickly please. I’m so hungry I could faint.”

Suddenly, his cell phone rang. It was a call from Dong Shanshan.

“Hello, Shanshan,” Zhang Ye answered.

Dong Shanshan immediately asked when the call connected, “Tell me about the viewership ratings.”

Zhang Ye said, “It’s not even out yet.”

Dong Shanshan said, “What about the preview report?”

“I didn’t see it either. There’s no preview report this time. We’ll have to wait for the direct report in the afternoon,” Zhang Ye said. “You’re already the fifth person to call me and ask about the viewership ratings today. At least you’re calling me in the morning. That Old Yao called me at 3 AM, what the heck.”

Dong Shanshan laughed, “That’s true. How many industry insiders are not concerned about the situation regarding the viewership for The Voice now? All of the TV stations and industry insiders are paying their full attention to it.”

Zhang Ye said, “Surely not?”

Dong Shanshan said, “What do you mean by surely not? Do you know how many TV stations have done concise research and analysis on The Voice internally? Your new program has not only shocked the audience, even the industry is in an uproar because of it. As Executive Producer Hu Fei put it this morning, it is a phenomenal variety show that should be thought of as a textbook

example. Didn't you go on the Internet? There are many people and media outlets online who are predicting the viewership ratings of The Voice!"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye lowered his head and spotted seven or eight sets of newspapers lying on the coffee table. They were all this morning's newspapers. It didn't even warrant a question. It must have been his mother who bought them. Zhang Ye immediately picked one up and started browsing through them. Every newspaper's entertainment page had news of The Voice in it.

"Central TV Department 1's Ultimate Comeback!"

"All-around Praise for The Voice of China!"

"Zhang Ye vs Industry Peers, Comes Away with Another Victory!"

"Just What Will Viewership of The Voice be? Can Zhang Ye Get Last Laugh?"

"The Voice of China: Grand Gathering of Music! Carnival Created by Zhang Ye and Central TV Department 1!"

"The Voice's Shocking Launch! New Model for Variety Shows Maybe Born!"

"The Voice Creates 100 million RMB Wealth for Central TV

Department 1!”

“Zhang Ye Once Again Creates Legend!”

“Traditional Big Brother Central TV Working Hand in Hand with Zhang Ye to Redeem Throne as Variety Big Brother? “

Zhang Ye adjusted the newspaper a little. “Whoa, all the articles are praising me?”

His father said, “Your mom didn’t buy those that didn’t.”

Zhang Ye: “...”

Checking online, there was also all kinds of news about The Voice being published.

There was an article that was written like this. It read as follows:

I’ve never hidden my admiration for Zhang Ye, just like how Zhang Ye has never hidden his ambition for the arts. We’re seeing Zhang Ye’s new work once again, and also seeing Zhang Ye fighting with his peers once more. How many times has it been? I don’t believe that it’s only me, but many others who probably have already lost count as well. Before the broadcast of The Voice, there were many people from the television industry who joined in the boycott and denouncement of Zhang Ye. Even after the program has been broadcast, after they have witnessed such an exciting show, there are still those who are harboring hopes that The

Voice's viewership ratings will not meet expectations somehow, wanting to call The Voice a show that's good but has no appeal. I have to say this, but do people like this think they can surpass Zhang Ye? Do they think they can also produce a world-class program like that? Dream on! This is the reason why China's variety shows are all going downhill!

I'm sure I will get critics regarding this article, that I will be scolded or insulted. But I'm not afraid. All I want to ask is, which of our own Chinese variety shows have the potential to move out of the domestic market? Just tell me, which one? In all these decades, none has been able to do so! All we have are foreign, imported shows that we spend large sums of money to purchase licensing and spend all our energy on trying to promote them! But now? Zhang Ye's appearance has changed the entire situation. There are already people overseas who have seen Zhang Ye's Talk Show and at least two foreign teams are already discussing importing the talk show to their shores. I've received news that foreign television stations are already prepared to make an offer to buy Zhang Ye's copyrights, our Chinese copyrights, to the show. There's even a possibility of Zhang Ye becoming their consultant to the show. When all these will be confirmed is just a matter of time!

What no one has been able to achieve in decades of our domestic variety world has been achieved by Zhang Ye. Only he has been able to do it!

So isn't it worth it for us to support a person like that? Is it not worth our effort to go and love and protect him?

But what is the truth of all that is happening? They are saying that Zhang Ye has stolen all the limelight for himself and wrecked people's careers. The industry and many of his peers are all boycotting him! It's all a huge mess!

I really want to laugh at this!

But at the same time, I feel like crying!

Is The Voice not worthy of its title sponsorship and joining fees? Based on what reason is it not worthy of it? Please do not compare it to those shows and standards of yours! You all think that The Voice's viewership ratings will not be good because the variety show market is in a downturn? The market is too small? The market is too saturated? That's basically a pack of bull! If your viewership ratings are not good, that only goes to show that your shows are not crafted well enough! It only shows that your standards are not good enough! Those are all excuses that you all are using to cover up your failures! But what I believe in, or am willing to believe in, is that The Voice will definitely give us fully satisfactory viewership ratings. If you don't believe so, let's just wait and see. I have every confidence in The Voice and even more so in Zhang Ye!

—The End!

After reading it, Zhang Ye was elated.

Well said!

Very well said!

Just look at those words, just look at those paragraphs, it's all extremely professional!

Chapter 685 – The Viewership Ratings That Shocked The Whole Country!

Online.

Starting from last night, the talk surrounding The Voice did not stop being discussed at all. Even at 3, 4 AM in the morning, there were still netizens who were discussing the show, contestants, as well as Zhang Ye's amazing recital speed. There were all kinds of discussions about the show but weren't too focused on one subject. However, since this morning, the netizens and industry insiders were only talking about one thing. The most repeated topic was—just how high viewership ratings The Voice would get!

“It's still not out yet?”

“How slow!”

“I've already watched The Voice three times over since last night!”

“I've been waiting since nighttime, but there wasn't even a preview report released!”

“It's almost 9 AM, is the staff not awake yet? Hurry up and quickly compile all the information. The entire nation is waiting for it!”

“Hurry, hurry, hurry!”

“F**k, this is not a matter of waking up or whatever. The collection of the viewership ratings is very complex and requires a compilation of many figures and statistics before they can give us the most accurate viewership figures.”

“I’m looking forward to it!”

“I’m so anxious!”

“Me too, I really want to know how high they were!”

“I wonder if The Voice can beat those shows imported from Korea!”

“Don’t you know Zhang Ye’s nickname? This dude is the leader of Professional Korean Insulters! Somehow, I get the feeling that he made this show to attack those Korean shows! I know Zhang Ye too well!”

“Everyone, prepare yourselves a little first. Most shows do not fare too well in their first episodes, unless they are those foreign-imported shows that have already been well-known for a while. Either that or they are phenomenal shows which are already in their second or third seasons and already have an audience base. Those are the ones who have the possibility to hit 1% in the viewership ratings. Otherwise, even our domestic variety shows which are very popular only get 0.7% to 0.8% for their premiere

episodes. Even those with an average viewership rating of 1.1% needed to slowly gain and accumulate popularity. So, my guess is that The Voice will get 0.9% for its premiere episode, or about 0.85%, thereabouts! And that's on the conservative side!"

"The person above has analyzed well."

"Agreed, don't have too high expectations, otherwise, if the viewership ratings don't turn out so well, I really wouldn't be able to accept it!"

"Premiere episode getting 0.9%? That's already defying all logic!"

"I don't think that will be all. This show is very enjoyable to watch, so we cannot use our usual standards to judge it, nor should we analyze it that way. The Voice's premiere episode will get 1% at the very least no matter what! For sure!"

"Is there a chance for 1%?"

"What suspense! Even if it's unlikely, anything is possible!"

"I also think The Voice will do well! Zhang Ye's really awesome!"

"I love Zhang Ye so much! I love The Voice too! This is what a real singing show should be like! This is what you call the most sincere form of art! A Like for Teacher Zhang!"

Many of those who worked in the television industry also gave their stand on things and did their own analysis and viewership rating estimates of the show.

Like Beijing Television's Hu Fei—he predicted 1.2%, which was very high!

And Beijing Television's host, Dong Shanshan, who also posted on Weibo, predicted The Voice to hit 1.1% in the viewership ratings. That was very high as well!

Weiwo Online Television Station's Wang Xiong gave a prediction of 1.0%.

Central Radio Station's Tian Bin predicted 0.95%.

.....

Just before 10 AM, a Weibo poll was created by the official Weibo site. It was a poll to let all the netizens predict the viewership ratings of The Voice!

There were 5 options to vote for.

1: Viewership rating of 0.5% and below.

2: Viewership rating between 0.5-0.8%.

3: Viewership rating between 0.8-1.0%.

4: Viewership rating between 1.0-1.2%

5: Viewership rating between 1.2-1.5%.

The netizens all rushed to vote at once!

“Choose option 4!”

“F**k, option 4? Isn’t that too high?”

“Yeah, option 3 seems to be the most likely result!”

“I’ll choose option 5!”

“Damn, that option is definitely impossible!”

“Option 5...that’s way too high!”

“Ahem, calm down, calm down. I like The Voice too, but the fifth option is really kinda outrageous. Much less The Voice’s premiere episode, even those popular variety shows still airing now or those Korean, American, Japanese licensed programs would at most get an average of 1.3% or so. Like that recent Korean licensed reality TV show, it’s viewership rating now is at 1.4%, right? The best it got did not even pass 1.5%, am I right? That is already the peak of

variety shows these days for the nationwide, simultaneous daily time slot top spot, nationwide weekly top spot, and nationwide monthly top spot. A reality TV show licensed from Japan shown on Sundays has a viewership rating of 1.35% and that's already the top for Sunday's nationwide simultaneous time slot. It only got second overall for the nationwide monthly viewership ratings, behind that Korean licensed show. As you can see, this is the overall situation for the state of variety shows these days, with the other average variety shows struggling to get around 0.5%. The Voice wants to achieve 1.2-1.5% viewership ratings in just its first episode? Thinking of challenging those extremely popular foreign licensed shows immediately after broadcasting the premiere episode? That's definitely too unbelievable!"

"Why would that be impossible? There's no limit to my confidence in Zhang Ye!"

"Supporting! We will choose option 5 without explanation!"

"Uh, I also hope that The Voice will contend on behalf of our domestically produced variety shows. I too hope that The Voice can outperform those foreign licensed shows, but this still isn't likely, after all, it's only the first episode. We can wait until later, when The Voice grows more popular and gathers more viewers. When The Voice goes to the finals of the competition, we can fight it out with all those other shows for first place! To compete and find out who is better!"

"We still have to wait for that many episodes?"

"We must settle this once and for all with the first episode!"

“Right, kill them! Who cares!”

“Wasn’t The Voice viewed with pessimism back then? Didn’t everyone think that those words ‘to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene’ uttered by Teacher Zhang were pure nonsense? Then let’s show them the people who don’t know the immensity of the universe! I shall choose option 5 as well! F**k them!”

When it came to foreigners or foreign related things, some of those people did not even look or ask any questions. They were definitely Zhang Ye’s fans as only he would have so many nationalistic fans like himself. Whenever they saw something foreign, it was like they were on stimulants, cursing and swearing without control!

“5!”

“I choose 5 too!”

“Yes, we can’t lose on momentum alone! Voting for option 5!”

“Supporting Zhang Ye! Supporting our domestic variety shows!”

“Right! Let’s fight it out with those foreign imported shows in the viewership ratings!”

The resolute Zhang Ye fans moved many people as they also went along and voted for the impossible option: 1.2-1.5%.

Finally, after two hours, the poll results were finalized. A total of 35,000 people voted!

Option 1: 6%.

Option 2: 9%.

Option 3: 18%.

Option 4: 42%.

Option 5: 25%.

The majority of the netizens still voted for option 4: 1.0-1.2%, as this was the most likely and hopeful outcome, or because it was a result they wanted to see.

.....

When a few leaders of Central TV Department 1 saw the online poll results, they lightly nodded their heads in agreement. This poll reflected the predictions they had in mind as well. They were hoping that The Voice would be able to get off to a winning start and get 1% in the viewership ratings to help them get the top spot for the nationwide simultaneous time slot for Thursday. As for the

weekly or monthly nationwide viewership ratings, they did not think that far. After all, there were so many 1.3-1.4% Japanese and Korean licensed programs blocking their way to get that result.

Ha Qiqi was very surprised at the results of the poll, because her own predictions were not even that high. She had not expected the netizens to think so highly of them and trust in them!

Zhang Zuo did not even see this poll. He was at home, unable to stay settled, feeling very nervous and full of anticipation. He kept checking his phone to see if there were any updates of the viewership ratings.

Other than Central TV, the other television station were also fully focused.

.....

Liaodong Television Station.

“Is it out yet?”

“Not yet.”

“Hur hur, did you see the voting by the netizens?”

“I saw it, they’re all just laypeople.”

“Yeah, indeed, their thinking is too amateurish. There were even people who chose option 5? Do they really believe that The Voice will get 1.2-1.5% of the viewership ratings?”

“They’re just blindly voting, but it doesn’t matter whichever one they vote for.”

.....

Shanghai Television Station.

“How much do you guys think it will be?”

“0.9%, I guess.”

“That’s more like it. Looking at the votes from the netizens, they’re really being too optimistic.”

“That’s because they don’t understand the situation in the industry.”

“Yes, although I don’t wish to admit this, there really aren’t any domestically produced shows that can beat the viewership ratings of a foreign licensed program.”

.....

At Beijing Television Station.

“I hope that The Voice will give us something to cheer about!”

“Though it’s not likely that it will surpass 1% in the viewership ratings, right?”

“It’s all up to Teacher Zhang!”

“We definitely need to support it. After all, Teacher Zhang was a host who walked through the doors of Beijing Television Station! Hopefully it can hit 1%!”

.....

There were even more negative responses at the television station where the variety show licensed from Japan was shown at, especially within that program’s team itself.

“They won’t be able to do it.”

“Trying to compete with us in viewership is definitely impossible.”

“Yeah, how can they compete with 1.35%?”

“The netizens are such teases, why are they even voting for

option 5?”

“The Voice’s viewership rating might not even pass 0.9%. It’s just the first episode after all!”

“Back then, Zhang Ye even dared to spout nonsense of overtaking all the variety shows? Claiming that all the variety shows in the country won’t be better than his? I would like to see just how high the viewership of The Voice will get!”

“He’s truly too arrogant.”

.....

Everyone’s predictions were different!

Every television station’s prediction was also different!

But the common thing among them was that everyone was paying crazy attention to the viewership ratings of The Voice!

Suddenly, at noon, just past 12 PM, the nationwide viewership ratings for Thursday’s variety shows were released under the focus of numerous people!

“Ah!”

“It’s here, it’s here!”

“Let me take a look!”

“Dammit, it’s finally released!”

“What’s the situation like? How high was The Voice?”

Countless netizens had gathered at once!

Countless industry insiders were observing!

However, when they saw the statistics for the viewership ratings, everyone was shocked. In their minds, they could only say something along the lines of “What the f**k to your second granny!”

“How’s that possible!”

“Heavens!”

“I’ve been blinded!”

“F**k your grandfather!!”

“This...was this compiled erroneously!?”

The figure on the statistics report was totally shocking to look at!

The Voice of China's first episode of viewership—2.01%!!!

Chapter 686 – Number 1 In The Nation!

Jiangnan Television Station.

The staff were all quiet.

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

“ ... ”

Some just stayed silent!

Some were shocked and at a loss for words!

.....

Liaodong Television Station.

In a certain program team's office.

A leader held the viewership ratings report and came out of his office. “Someone tell me that these viewership statistics are wrong! How could it goddamn break the 2-point barrier?”

No one spoke.

No one could answer the leader on this question.

It was not wrong, and couldn't possibly be wrong. The viewership ratings were real. It was indeed a 2 point rating. 2.01%!

.....

A certain program team behind a show using Korean copyrights.

The office was in an uproar, everyone confused

“What’s going on? Just what is going on?”

“Our viewership ratings...were...were surpassed by The Voice!?”

“Oh my god!”

“Something must have gone wrong somewhere!”

“How did it turn out like that!?”

“F**k! How could The Voice get such a high viewership rating!”

.....

Weiwo Online Television Station.

The ex-colleagues of Zhang Ye were all shocked with their mouths agape. Every one of them was more excited than the other!

“He’s done it!”

“Teacher Zhang really did it!”

“F**k yeah! Our country has finally produced a local copyrighted variety show that has put great pressure on those foreign copyrighted shows!”

“How godly! Zhang Ye’s is too damn godly!”

“This is so unbelievable! How is that possible! How’s that possible!?”

“Are Zhang Ye and The Voice both on steroids?!?!?”

“Does it have to get such a high viewership rating!”

“Yeah, I guessed that The Voice would get a very high viewership rating, but I didn’t expect it to be this high! In the current market of variety programs, how could there be a show that broke the 2-point barrier!”

.....

At Beijing Television Station.

Hu Fei held the viewership ratings report for Thursday's variety shows that was disseminated by the management and stared at it dumbfounded for a long time. Then he quietly took a cigarette from the table beside him and lighted it. He had already quit smoking for a long time, so when he took a puff from it, he violently coughed and then went on to aggressively curse, "What the f**k!"

Hearing the loud shout from Hu Fei's office, the program team staff of Do You Remember also cried out. No one could hold it in any longer!

Xiao Lu: "Someone, please pinch me! Is this for real?"

Hou Ge: "Your third uncle's grandma!"

Hou Di: "This defies all common sense! This totally defies all common sense!"

Dafei: "The Voice is crazy! Teacher Zhang is a crazy man!"

Dong Shanshan was shocked into silence!

.....

At Central TV.

The Central TV leaders were all dumbfounded!

Jiang Yuan was dumbfounded!

Ha Qiqi was dumbfounded!

Zhang Zuo was dumbfounded!

All of The Voice's program team staff were...dumbfounded!

“How much?”

“Can someone repeat it to me again!”

“F**k, we got a viewership rating of 2.01%!?”

“I'm getting dizzy, someone support me a little!”

“I can't stand straight either anymore!”

.....

The industry was in an uproar!

The entire population was also in an uproar!

The Voice's viewership ratings had topped the entire variety world!

Number 1 for the same time slot!

Number 1 for the entire week!

Number 1 for the entire month!

Number 1 for the entire year!!

And this was only for the premiere episode's viewership!

And this was even for a program that was scheduled in a Thursday evening broadcast slot!!

Countless citizens did not know how else they could express their current mood. Countless industry insiders also did not know how they could express their amazement at this. They only felt that a million lines of "what the f**k" were flashing in front of their eyes over and over and over again!

At this point, many people suddenly remembered the poll that was started on Weibo regarding the viewership ratings of The Voice. It now looked to be a total joke! What were the given options? 0.5% and below... 0.5-0.8%... 0.8-1.0%... 1.0-1.2%... 1.2-1.5%... In the end, none of the votes that the netizens made were correct. Not a single person guessed right about The Voice's viewership ratings, because...because The Voice's finalized viewership ratings weren't even included in the options of this poll! The option for a result that exceeded 1.5% did not even f**king appear!

Why was there no such option made available?

Why was there no option given for 1.5% and above?

It wasn't because the official Weibo account was careless, but because no one had ever expected that a premiere episode of a variety show would exceed 1.5%! They did not even expect it to hit 1.5%, let alone exceed it! That was the reason why the poll starter did not create such an option nor consider the possibility of including one. The trend of the variety show market in recent years and the many years of experience in the television industry told them that this was not a possible outcome!

However, today, The Voice did it!

In the market of TV variety where it was common to get a 0-point viewership rating, Zhang Ye had achieved a 2-point rating!

Today, at this moment, Zhang Ye along with his new show had

scored a victory over those doubters who mocked them!!

A title sponsorship record!

An exclusive online broadcast fee record!

A production budget record!

A production timeline record!

And a viewership rating record! It was a chain of records!

The Voice of China had broken the records one by one, and with each feat, sent a shockwave across the country!

The doubters were all left speechless from anger!

Those who mocked the program fell silent!

For the first time, they seemingly remembered what sort of person Zhang Ye was! For the first time, they seemingly remembered all the things that happened with Zhang Ye!

The media reports were overwhelmingly flooding in!

The media was going in overdrive!

562 Citizen Journalism: “Zhang Ye: Miracle Maker!”

Phoenix Sun Daily: “The Voice’s Viewership Shatters the Ceiling! The Light of Local Variety! ”

Entertainment Blast: “The Voice climbs to top of variety world! Taking nationwide number 1 spot!”

On the front page of Tieba: “The Voice’s viewership ratings break 2 points, how did this miracle occur?”

Youth Spirit discussion forums: “The Voice leads local copyrighted shows into battle against foreign copyrighted shows! ”

News headlines on Weibo’s front page: “The attack of domestically produced shows! Zhang Ye sounds the bugle for retaliation! Putting pressure on all foreign copyrighted shows! ”

People’s Daily Online News: “Miracle? No, this was a divine act of god! ”

Beijing Times: “A day that belongs to Zhang Ye and his The Voice! ”

Nationwide Morning News: “A hero of the television industry, a legend of the variety world, please put your hands together for The Voice and Zhang Ye! ”

Suddenly.

A poem reappeared once more on Weibo.

Everyone was surprised for a bit, but started to forward it like crazy!

Zhang Ye's fans forwarded it!

Yao Jiancai forwarded it!

Zhang Xia forwarded it!

The married couple, Chen Guang and Fan Wenli, forwarded it!

Ha Qiqi forwarded it!

Zhang Zuo forwarded it!

Su Na forwarded it!

The Voice's official Weibo account forwarded it!

Central TV Department 1's official Weibo forwarded it!

10,000!

30,000!

50,000!

100,000!

The number of times it was forwarded kept rising as the poem climbed up Weibo's trending topics in just a short time with an unstoppable force that would kill any gods or buddhas in order to claim the top headline!

How to describe the Revered Peak?

Towering over all Shandong with endless green.

Heavenly beautiful splendor Nature gathered;

the shaded north side cut off from the south side's sheen.

Clustering clouds cleanse the cracks in the heart,

eyes strain watching homebound birds fly through the ravine.

Someday I shall ascend your highest heights

to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene.

Chapter 687 – Highly Sought After!

At Zhang Ye's parents' house.

Zhang Ye was having lunch with his parents and Chenchen in the living room when he received a call regarding the viewership ratings. Upon hearing the news, he was slightly stunned and then said: "Oh, thanks for telling me."

The person who called him was Little Wang from the program team. After hearing Zhang Ye's calm reply, she didn't know whether to laugh or cry, then said agitatedly: "Director Zhang, the viewership rating is 2.01%! It's 2.01%!"

Zhang Ye said: "I got it."

Little Wang said: "You're not satisfied with that?"

Zhang Ye said: "No, I am very satisfied. Isn't this quite good?"

Little Wang said: "Only quite good? This is already defying all common sense! You're really too awesome!"

It wasn't that Zhang Ye did not feel excited, but that this viewership rating was already within Zhang Ye's expectations when they started on the production of The Voice. The people from this world had not seen the charm and power of The Voice before and were unfamiliar with it since it was not within the market norms. Thus, many people did not have any expectations

for The Voice from the very beginning or only had very low expectations for it. They felt that it would be pretty good if they could achieve 0.7% in the viewership ratings. If the viewership ratings hit 1%, it would be a surprise. But Zhang Ye was different; he knew the popularity of The Voice in his previous world. Hence, when the result of the viewership ratings achieve a score just over 2%, although Zhang Ye was surprised and felt very happy, his reaction was definitely not as great as others.

After hanging up, his mother immediately asked, “Are the viewership ratings out yet?”

Zhang Ye acknowledged while smiling, “The viewership ratings are 2.01%, still passable.”

Upon hearing that, his mother said with a slightly hoarse voice, “My goodness! It broke 2%?”

His father did not quite understand, so he asked, “Is that very high or very low?”

“Of course it’s very high!” His mother knew more about viewership ratings and continued, “Right now, the most popular variety show, which uses Korean copyrights, has only slightly more than 1% of the viewership ratings!”

His father nodded and said, “Then that’s pretty good.”

His mother could not sit still any longer. She put down her

chopsticks and said, “I’m not eating anymore. I’m going to our neighbor’s house for a while to tell them about the viewership ratings!”

His father said, “Are you going to brag and act cool again?”

His mother rolled her eyes and said, “It’s none of your business!”

“Mom.” Zhang Ye gave a wry smile and said, “Please eat your lunch first.”

“I’m already full.” His mother dressed up a little formally and went out immediately with a smile on her face.

Zhang Ye shook his head, then picked up his chopsticks and hurriedly grabbed some food. “I also have to eat quickly. There’s probably going to be many calls coming and I’ll have to answer them all.”

Indeed, just after Zhang Ye took his last bite and put down his chopsticks, the phone calls came in wave after wave!

.....

“Zhang’er, you’re awesome!”

“It’s not too bad.”

“When will you be treating me?”

“Whoa, we’ll have to wait until I have finished with my work this quarter.”

“Then we have reached an agreement. You definitely can’t escape from treating me!”

.....

“Zhang Ye, you’re getting even more popular now!”

“Think about what you’re saying. I’ve always been very popular.”

“The viewership ratings have broken 2%, you’re too face smacking! Some people’s faces are all swollen now!”

“Ha!”

.....

“Teacher Zhang, I’m from the Beijing Times. Can we ask you for an interview?”

“Which day?”

“Is today OK?”

“Oh, these next two days will be difficult as I’m very busy.”

“It’s fine. Then we will interview you on another day based on your schedule. Oh right, I have to congratulate you first!”

“Thank you.”

.....

“I finally got through. Teacher Zhang, your cell phone is even more difficult to get through to than a president’s phone?”

“Hai, it’s only today that I’m getting so many calls. Usually, no one will contact me at all.”

“Your new program is too awesome! You have made it so godly!”

“It’s not bad, right?”

“You’re really not being modest at all.”

“Why should I be modest? It was within my calculations.”

.....

“Brother Zhang.”

“Ai, CEO Wu.”

“I just want to update you on something. I’ve just received news from various retail chains and sales channels that our Brain Gold product sales volume has been soaring off the charts. The exact data is not out yet and we’ll have to wait until the end of this month or beginning of next month to find out, but the trend is already very obvious! Especially in these major cities and districts like Beijing and Shanghai, there was an exceptionally obvious increase in sales volume! It’s even higher than what we estimated yesterday!”

“That’s good.”

“Thank you, Teacher Zhang!”

“Don’t say that, I should be the one thanking you instead. If not for your investment on the title sponsorship, we would not have the money to make The Voice into what it is now.”

“It’s because of your good planning that it worked. In the future, if there are such good opportunities again, you must not forget us!”

“That’s for sure.”

.....

In the blink of an eye, he had already received more than a dozen calls.

Some of the calls were from people at Central TV.

Some were from his relatives.

Some were from the newspaper reporters.

And many were from Zhang Ye's friends.

The calls lasted from 12 PM until 2 PM. This was already the usual for Zhang Ye. He had already gotten used to it. As his circle continued growing with his rise in popularity, Zhang Ye got to know more and more people. Naturally, with such a big commotion, everyone would be guaranteed to call him up to congratulate him.

After the calls were done, his father went to take his afternoon nap. Chenchen kept holding onto Zhang Ye's mother's cell phone and playing games on it on the sofa. Zhang Ye shouted at her, "Don't play too long." Then, he went back into his room and switched on his computer to browse the Internet.

The Internet was in an uproar!

The industry was in an uproar!

The media was in an uproar!

The entire country was discussing The Voice!

In the past, Zhang Ye had also created many big issues and released numerous works like the lecture on Dream of the Red Chamber at Peking University, Zhang Ye's Talk Show, Lecture Room, and his crosstalk. Among them, there were a few that hit the headlines while some others also received great response and created heated discussions. But now, when compared to The Voice, all of those issues were nothing. Zhang Ye had never gotten on the headlines so easily before. It was safe to say that this was the work that most people were paying attention to and the response to it was really too explosive!

You couldn't begin to imagine it when 4 of the top 10 topics on Weibo were related to The Voice!

You couldn't even imagine it just by randomly checking the entertainment section of any forum. There, 1 out of every 3 posts wrote about The Voice!

Zhang Ye's name was also brought up numerous times by the netizens and media!

An unprecedented amount of discussions!

An unprecedented level of popularity!

For some programs to be considered phenomenal, they would have to be assessed first on the show's influence, and second on its viewership ratings. For many variety shows, after broadcasting its first episode, it would take some time to gather data on whether or not it had the makings to become a phenomenon, because viewership ratings needed to stabilize step by step while its popularity would have to increase bit by bit. Until the viewership ratings reached a certain level and the attention that the citizens paid to the show reached a certain point would the program be confirmed by the industry as a phenomenal variety show. This would then be the highest honor that a variety show could receive that would confirm its status.

However, this was unnecessary for The Voice. The Voice no longer needed time to slowly build up or to depend upon its future performances. After only the first episode, The Voice had already reached the level of a phenomenal variety show. Whether it was someone who had biased views against Zhang Ye or the industry insiders who did not like The Voice, none of them could deny this reality. They had to accept the truth as it was!

If the viewership ratings of a premiere episode could annihilate all the variety shows in the country and not be proclaimed as a phenomenal variety show, then what program would still dare to be crowned with this title!?

The netizens were coming up with all sorts of theories!

“Zhang Ye is invincible!”

“In the variety world, who can stop The Voice?”

“Zhang Ye has once again proven his ability to everyone! He’s really unbeatable!”

“Those television stations and industry insiders who doubted him are such jokes. I wonder where they disappeared to now. They haven’t shown up since the viewership ratings were released!”

“They definitely won’t show themselves.”

“Who would still dare to come out? Their faces have already turned green from the face-smacking!”

“2.01% of the viewership ratings! And only turning green? This is more like being face-smacked until they vomit blood!”

“Even now, I am still in disbelief of the viewership ratings! How could it be so high?!”

“That’s right. Just look at everyone forwarding that poem, Admiring the Mountains. It’s already been forwarded tens of thousands of times and commented on hundreds of thousands of times. A few days ago, who would have thought that The Voice of China could get such a viewership rating? Who could expect that Zhang Ye actually managed to achieve his lofty claims of ‘Someday I shall ascend your highest heights / to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene’! To be honest, I can understand what those

industry insiders are feeling. It's not that they are unprofessional, but just that Zhang Ye is too ridiculous!"

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Meanwhile.

In a meeting room at a certain television station.

There were about a dozen people attending the meeting room. The atmosphere was heavy. Everyone was staring at the Thursday's variety shows' viewership ratings ranking dazed.

During the boycott of Zhang Ye, their television station had been the one who pushed for the most support. From the leaders to the program team heads, many of them were involved in the boycott of The Voice. They had condemned Zhang Ye for breaking the industry rules and disrupting the market prices as their television station had two programs that were affected by this when a few celebrities rejected and broke their contracts to record the programs because they felt that the joining payment was too low. But now, those people who boycotted Zhang Ye could no longer muster up a word anymore. There was no way to boycott him at all. The Voice had used its viewership ratings to tell those doubters that their joining payment was definitely worth its price! That it was worth the amount of the title sponsorship fee! Rather than 100 million RMB for its title sponsorship fee, with the viewership ratings that they had, even if Zhang Ye asked for 150 million now, there would still be companies willing to purchase it!

After a while, the silence was broken.

A person said, “Everyone, let’s discuss it.”

Everyone stayed silent.

After a few moments, that person suddenly said, “Go and check Zhang Ye’s contract with Central TV Department 1. How long is his contract duration? Is it a yearly contract or a program based contract?”

A woman said in surprise, “What do you mean?”

That leader said, “If it is a program based contract, then when Zhang Ye’s contract with Central TV expires, see if we can get Zhang Ye to join us!”

A man smiled bitterly and said, “It should be a yearly contract.”

Another staff member said, “I heard from my friend working in Central TV saying that Zhang Ye has signed a one-year contract with Central TV.”

That leader said, “There’s no other way then.” After saying that, he sighed and shook his head continuously.

At that time, when Zhang Ye was suspended by Peking University because of the scolding incident, he was also featured on the news.

Someone from the station had previously suggested that they should invite Zhang Ye to join them but after some discussion by the station, it was not approved. But now, even if they wanted to poach Zhang Ye, they did not have a chance to do so!

The other television stations also began to check out Zhang Ye's contract terms with Central TV, toying with the idea of poaching him. The birth of The Voice had tempted many of them! But after they found out that Zhang Ye's contract with Central TV was a yearly one, those television station basically gave up on the idea of poaching him at all. They knew for sure that Central TV Department 1 would definitely not release him even if they paid the breach of contract fees for Zhang Ye!

For a person who could produce a program that received over 2% of the viewership ratings so effortlessly, who would not want him?!

Besides, he was very different from the other famous program planners. You could poach many famous program planners, but would still have to fully fit all the aspects of the program team and setup. There might be a chance that some segments or staff members who did not fit properly or gel well would cause some problems to occur in the end. But Zhang Ye was different, if they managed to poach Zhang Ye, it was equivalent to poaching an entire team of the program planner, executive director, and host. Just him alone would be equivalent to a whole team!

Hence, who would not want him?

Who would not feel tempted?

From being the reason of a boycott in the industry to becoming highly sought after, this change in attitudes could not be any greater!

Chapter 688 – The Country’s Citizens Imitate!

That night.

The Voice of China’s online video was officially uploaded. As Central TV Department 1 had already agreed on a contract with an online video hosting service, the project was initiated very quickly as they wanted to ride the momentum of the show’s popularity. The online video hosting service website’s team had finally gotten everything in working order overnight. At 7:30 PM, The Voice’s first episode had appeared on the website’s main page at a prominent location together with an ad banner. This was also covertly a publicity campaign for The Voice to have an online channel of distribution.

1 million!

5 million!

10 million!

Once the video was uploaded, the number of views kept increasing!

Many of the “northern drifters”¹ who stayed in rented apartments did not own a television set. Having found out about The Voice from short online video clips, they wanted to catch the full episode, which was the reason why the views on the video

were increasing so quickly. Many of these younger people were savvy at using the Internet.

At this time, the popularity of The Voice continued on strongly. With every second that passed by, The Voice was creating history in the recent years of variety programs. This program had been pushed to the very top and Zhang Ye was also riding on the crest of this wave!

However, there were also some side events occurring at the same time.

At 8 PM, Zhang Ye received a call from the program team's Assistant Director Ha Qiqi.

Ha Qiqi: "Hello, Director Zhang."

Zhang Ye: "Sister Qi, what's the matter?"

Ha Qiqi said: "About that, an advertiser just contacted me, it's the executive from Dahua Hotel. He was requesting that you slow your reciting during the advertising messages' segment from the second episode of The Voice on. Just a slight pause where you can clearly pronounce their hotel's name syllable by syllable. This doesn't apply to any of the other advertisers; they just hope that the words 'Beijing Da-hua Ho-tel' can be slowed down a little."

Zhang Ye asked: "Why didn't he contact me directly?"

“I don’t know why either, perhaps he wasn’t too comfortable speaking with you and just contacted me directly instead. I think he also contacted Central TV Department 1 and the station was thinking that you might really have spoken too fast, and that it wouldn’t do justice to the advertisers. After all, they did spend money to purchase the advertising rights, so...” Ha Qiqi sounded a little hesitant.

Zhang Ye said: “Did the station approve this already?”

Ha Qiqi answered: “Not really, they did not say so directly.”

Zhang Ye determinedly responded: “Tell the executive at Dahua Hotel that I won’t be slowing my speed. The future style of hosting in The Voice also won’t change. If they feel uncomfortable about it, they can come and look for me directly and talk about it. If that still doesn’t work out, then we will refund them the advertising costs.”

“Refund?” Ha Qiqi said with a hint of surprise, not expecting Zhang Ye to be so persistent.

Zhang Ye confirmed that.

Ha Qiqi probed a little: “But if the station says...”

Zhang Ye interrupted: “It doesn’t matter who says what.”

“Sure then, I understand.” Ha Qiqi knew what had to be done

from here.

Zhang Ye was very stubborn and headstrong in his position on this matter. In the field of artistic performances, he'd always had his own principles to follow. To put it in Beijing jargon, he was very stiff. No matter what anyone said, he would not listen or change his mind. In his previous world's version of The Voice, Hua Shao had been pressured by the program team leader and advertisers to slow down his reciting of the advertising messages several times to adhere to the requirements of the advertisers. That made The Voice have one less interesting point to look forward to.

However, Zhang Ye was not ready to cave in on such matters, nor was there a need to do so. Hua Shao was only a host on the program team of The Voice, and therefore did not have much authority in the decision making process. He also did not have much fame as a celebrity before becoming the host of The Voice. But it was different for Zhang Ye, as he had come on board to The Voice as a B-list celebrity. His fame and reputation were already known by everyone. The key factor was that he was also the executive director and executive program planner, while also informally the executive producer of the program. He was in charge of The Voice's overall planning and spending, so that would make him the highest up on the program team. Even the executive producer, Old Fu, had to step aside for him. Zhang Ye had no need to listen to anyone trying to give him instruction or making thoughtless comments!

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Past 8.

After he got off the phone, a heated discussion about Zhang Ye's eloquent reciting skills suddenly began online. The topic had slowly shifted from talking about the program and the contestants to focusing on Zhang Ye!

“That reciting speed, how godly!”

“Yeah, I was totally dumbfounded the first time I heard it!”

“I get shocked every time I listen to it, how could he be so fast!”

“Was it put together with the help of a computer?”

“You're thinking too much, why don't you make one for us to listen to?”

“Are those professional hosts all crazy like that? Is that something that all broadcasting hosts can do?”

“I don't know.”

“Right, I've never ever heard someone speak that fast before!”

Suddenly, the host of Beijing Television's Do You Remember, Dong Shanshan posted an audio clip. It turned out to be her trying

to imitate Zhang Ye's advertising messages. "I will not accept any gifts this year The only gift I will accept is Brain Gold I will not expect...There's no need to watch any TV shows this year The only TV show you need to watch is The Voice The authentic health product The attacking, the authentic The Voice Welcome to the broadcast of The Voice of China brought to you exclusively by our title sponsor The health Brain products...in health products... leader in health products...Brain Gold..." The audio clip ended there and accompanying this was a message at the end of the post: "I tried to recite a segment of it, but realized just how crazy that mouth of Zhang Ye's was. I couldn't do it, I totally couldn't copy it!"

Below were the comments from the netizens.

"Pfft!"

"Our goddess is so funny!"

"Teacher Shanshan, you've already done well!"

"Yeah, you said it very quickly too."

Dong Shanshan replied with a smiley face: "Even if I said it fast, it's not as fast as Zhang Ye. The accuracy of my pronunciation is not good either. I've already tried it more than a dozen times, but I just can't get it right. My mind can keep up but not my mouth."

At this time, Yao Jiancai also appeared.

Old Yao came out and immediately announced: “Let me try, let me!”

After around two minutes, Yao Jiancai posted a video of himself, the background showing that he was at some hotel, probably with a film crew at some place for filming. The video was recorded in a hotel room and Yao Jiancai could be heard clearing his throat before he quickly recited: “I will not accept accept any...gifts this year...The only gift I will accept is Brain Gold There’s no need to watch any TV shows this year The only TV show you need to watch is The Voice The authentic health product The authentic The Voice Welcome to the broadcast of The Voice of China brought to you exclusively by our title sponsor ladder...leader...” He managed to spew the lines of the advertising messages carelessly and did it a little faster than Dong Shanshan, but also recited many wrong words.

Many of Old Yao’s fans came to laugh at him.

“Haha.”

“Teacher Yao, you really think you could do it?”

“That was such an inferior version!”

“Teacher Yao, give it some more effort. You were a professional crosstalk actor in the past after all. Don’t all crosstalk actors learn speed recital?”

Yao Mi also teased her father by replying: “Dad, you’re the worst! Heehee.”

A depressed Yao Jiancai replied: “I’m just a supporting character and don’t depend on my wits and mouth, but that kid, Zhang Ye is a main character, so don’t compare us like that!”

Suddenly, even Chen Guang partook in the imitation game.

“Ah, Old Chen is here too!”

“Whoa, dude, you shouldn’t be disgracing yourself here, Old Chen!”

“Yeah, even a professional host and a crosstalk actor couldn’t do it, so why do you think you can!”

Chen Guang’s imitation was indeed a miserable one. His reciting speed was already slower than Zhang Ye’s by two to three times, yet he still stuttered and made a lot of mistakes with the words. On top of that, he was even using a script to read from but could not recite it successfully even at his own speed. After he posted the audio clip, Chen Guang left a 囧 emoticon below it. When everyone heard Zhang Ye’s recital of the advertising messages, they might have thought it would be difficult, but it was only after they tried for themselves that they realized this was not even about difficulty, this was already a speed that had exceeded mortals!

“Lemme try too!”

“I won’t believe it, I’ll give it a try too!”

“Haha, count me in!”

“Interesting, interesting!”

“I feel like I could do it!”

“It shouldn’t be a problem for me either. Wait a bit for me, everyone!”

No one knew when or where it started, but everyone was already trying to copy Zhang Ye’s advertising message online!

“I will not accept any gifts this year The only gift I will uh... accept is Brain Go-Gold...”

“As long as they get ack-acknow...ledged by at least three coaches they’ll win a 10,000 yuan Music Dreams Scholarship Sponsored by Brain...”

“We also give our thanks to Bei-Beijing Dahua Hotel for sponsoring the accommodations for the coat...coat, co...aches of The Voice of China!”

No one could say it as fluently as Zhang Ye!

While there were those who could recite it fluently, they did it with a much slower speed, carefully reading out each and every word, and none these were done in a single breath. Then there were those who committed many mistakes when they increased their speed of reciting. Many of them thought they could do it, so they kept trying and trying until they nearly went crazy!

Rather than reaching Zhang Ye's speed, most of them could not even hit half of his reciting speed! The person who did the best was a third year student from Media College's broadcast major, a class junior to Zhang Ye. He managed to read the entire advertising message of about 200 words in 22.3 seconds, taking a single breath in between!

As for Zhang Ye?

Zhang Ye did it in 14.7 seconds with a single breath!

The difference was nearly eight seconds!

Eight seconds might seem to pass in the blink of an eye, but only an industry insider would know what this really meant. They were worlds apart. For there to be a difference of eight seconds for 200 words, it could already be said that this was forever going to be an insurmountable divide! For such speed, even a difference of half a second would be a very large gap, let alone eight seconds!

“Who else?”

“No one will stand a chance anymore! It’s impossible!”

“F**k, it’s too difficult!”

“What kind of a mouth does that Zhang Ye have!”

“I don’t think anyone in the country...no, anyone in the world will be able to surpass that mouth of his, right?”

“Yeah, even if it’s those famous hosts overseas, they can’t possibly read with that kind of speed! This is a technique that truly belongs to Zhang Ye alone!”

Within the industry, many hosts did not feel convinced. Unlike Dong Shanshan who posted an audio clip to imitate the advertising messages, they couldn’t do the same. This was because Dong Shanshan and Zhang Ye were old classmates and had a good relationship. Even if she tried to rub some attention from off Zhang Ye to herself, it wasn’t a big deal. But for them, as professionals and people who were not close to Zhang Ye, they needed to refrain from getting too close. They couldn’t use him as an excuse to get some attention for themselves, so they could only secretly time themselves at home while attempting to recite the advertising messages. But just as expected, no one could achieve the level Zhang Ye had set. They couldn’t even reach half of the level he had set!

This was a result many did not expect. Perhaps they knew that their recital speeds could not possibly match up to Zhang Ye, but they couldn't have expected that they were off by so much!

Having tested themselves, these hosts gradually gasped in amazement upon realizing the difference!

This was really a show that could not be replicated whatsoever!

Just based on the hosting style alone, whether at home or abroad, only Zhang Ye could do it!

Chapter 689 – The Show's Second Episode!

The next day, Zhang Ye left Chenchen behind for his parents to take care of. He woke up, brushed his teeth and washed up, then had a light breakfast before leaving for work.

At Central TV.

When he reached the office, a lot of people greeted him.

“Director Zhang.”

“You’re here?”

“Good morning, Teacher Zhang.”

“Your new show is really defying all common sense!”

“When is the second episode going to start record? It’s a great joy to watch.”

“Director Zhang, when it’s time for the recording of the second episode, remember to leave some seats for our program team, alright? We would like to attend too and hopefully learn something from your team.”

“Director Zhang, The Voice has become extremely popular now. The entire country is talking about you. Our program team will be

starting a new program soon, do you think it would be possible to help us cross-promote it on your show during the commercial break in the middle for 10 seconds? The commercial breaks in between your show are being sold by Central TV Department 1 for such a high price now that we can't even afford it if we wanted to. Do you think you could put in a word for us? Seven or eight seconds is fine too!"

A bunch of people were greeting him, but Zhang Ye did not know most of them.

Zhang Ye just smiled along. If anyone asked him for help, he would agree as long as it was a small matter. He finally got into the elevator and went upstairs to his program team office.

When he entered the office, he could immediately hear the gathered staff chattering loudly.

Little Wang laughed happily. "How explosive, we're going to be famous!"

A female editor laughed. "Director Zhang's really too awesome. A viewership rating of 2.01%! You didn't see it, but I was working overtime in the office yesterday when the viewership ratings were released, and everyone in Central TV Department 1 was dumbfounded. All of them looked like they had seen a ghost! I don't even need to mention how satisfying that felt!"

A male editor said, "A show no one was optimistic about had somehow leaped right to the top of the variety world. All of this

still feels unreal to me!”

At this moment, everyone finally heard the footsteps.

“Ah, Director Zhang.”

“Director Zhang is here!”

Everyone went over and congregated. Most of the staff had the day off yesterday, so even if they knew about the viewership immediately after it was released, they did not have the chance to discuss it since they were not at work together. Today, the first thing they did when they arrived was discuss this issue. There were far too much they needed to get off their chests as they were very astonished by the results. Now that they saw Zhang Ye, they had even more things that they wanted to say that would last three days and nights. It was impossible to express their excitement and emotions in any language at this moment, or perhaps, only the pet phrase which Chen Guang always used would be able to describe it—this was truly unbelievable!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Did you all rest well yesterday?”

Wu Yi answered, “I did not rest at all!”

“Yup, yup.” Little Wang said, “After we heard about the viewership ratings, I was all perked up for the rest of the day. I couldn’t fall asleep until three in the morning. The entire day felt like a dream to me!”

Zhang Ye was tickled at this. “Then there’s no choice, even if you guys did not rest well. Because the preparation work beforehand still wasn’t enough due to being pressed for time, we still have to record the other contestants’ intro clips. We’ll have to jump back in with our engines running and get those intro clips done first. Then, depending on the time, we will record the blind auditions for episodes 2 and 3. As for how it will be arranged, that will depend on today’s progress. It’s best that we work fast so that we can record more episodes tomorrow.”

“Yes!”

“Got it!”

“Understood, Director Zhang!”

“The mission will definitely be completed!”

Everyone’s response was very loud and pumped full with energy!

If the viewership ratings and viewer response were not good, their spirits would have taken a blow and they would not have the passion to work anymore. After all, people needed acknowledgment from society to feel a sense of self-worth, and now that The Voice had leapt right to the top of the variety world, claiming the number one spot in recent years, they as a members of The Voice’s program team were full of spirit. They were now the top program team in the variety show industry, so their drive was also different. Without the need for Zhang Ye to say anything,

everyone was even more enthusiastic than Zhang Ye the executive director. All of them just wanted The Voice to do well!

Number 1 in the industry!

They had never had such glory in their lives before!

Ha Qiqi who arrived a little later and had just walked in, greeted, “Ai, Director Zhang, good morning.”

Zhang Ye turned around. “Oh, you’re here? How’s the issue with Dahua Hotel? Do we have to refund them the cost? If they want, I will send someone to negotiate with them.”

Ha Qiqi smiled and said, “They won’t ask for a refund.”

“Oh?” Zhang Ye said.

Ha Qiqi said, “The executive of Dahua Hotel came to look for me again yesterday. It was already quite late and I was worried that you might be sleeping already, so I didn’t update you. When they saw that there were many people imitating your advertising messages online, they realized that many of those people were trying very hard to get the lines memorized. The name of Dahua Hotel was plastered all over the internet and helped them get the maximum publicity they could receive. The executive told me that this was a very good advertising effect, and as of yesterday, the main branch, along with 5 other branches of their hotels, were fully booked till the next weekend. From that, I think they could

even be thinking of adding more advertising lines and surely won't be asking for a refund."

Zhang Ye nodded. "Then that's good, it would be quite troublesome to handle if they really wanted a refund. We would still have to write the contracts and sign another advertiser. As long as the advertisements are effective and we do not let them down for supporting us since the beginning, it's good enough." As long as it did not require Zhang Ye to bend his artistic principles, it was for the best that all this turned out to be a win-win situation. If due to Zhang Ye reading the advertising messages too fast and thus contributing to a weaker effect of the ads, then Zhang Ye would definitely feel a little bad about it.

Suddenly, the office telephone rang.

Little Wang went to pick it up: "Hello, this is The Voice's program team office."

It was Jiang Yuan's voice on the line: "I'm Jiang Yuan. Is your Director Zhang there yet?"

Little Wang quickly said: "Director Zhang is already here."

"OK, let him know that I want to see him in my office for a while." Jiang Yuan's tone carried a smile in it. She could hear that he was in a rather good mood.

Little Wang hung up the phone and informed Zhang Ye,

“Director Jiang wants to see you.”

Zhang Ye nodded and went out to take the elevator up to Jiang Yuan’s office.

Dong dong. He knocked on the door.

“Please come in.”

When he walked in, Jiang Yuan was currently drinking tea.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “You were looking for me, leader?”

Jiang Yuan stood up and said, “Come, take a seat.” Having said this, he took a paper cup and asked, “What would you like to drink?” He was actually intending to personally pour a drink for Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye hurriedly went over to him to stop him. “Don’t, leader. I will help myself.”

Jiang Yuan did not insist. He said, “You’ve really helped Central TV Department 1 save face this time. After watching the recording of The Voice that day, I’d already felt that the viewership ratings would not be poor, but who could have thought that it would be this high? No one in the entire industry could have predicted such an outcome! Little Zhang, the credit is yours. Well done! You’ve done really well!”

Zhang Ye spoke a few humble words.

Jiang Yuan said, “What do you all intend to do from here?”

Zhang Ye responded, “We will be recording the second and third episodes tomorrow.”

Jiang Yuan thought about this for a moment, then said, “I only have one worry right now. The response to the first episode was too good and the effects of the show were great as well, which are both good and bad things for the show. The good thing is that it loudly announced the branding of our show to everyone and helped the show quickly gain a market share. But the bad part is that it’s likely the later episodes won’t be able to do as well as the first one? After all, there aren’t really that many good contestants and it will become harder to record a good episode later on. We’re just afraid that the show will run out of steam and the episodes won’t be shot as well as the first one, making the audience feel disappointed, thus making the viewership ratings slide accordingly. If the slide is too great, the branding created won’t be guaranteed anymore and might just be a flash in the pan.”

Zhang Ye laughed, “I’ve already considered that. We will definitely work hard to gain the satisfaction of the audience.”

Jiang Yuan asked, “Are you confident?”

Zhang Ye replied, “More or less.”

“Alright then, I’ll leave this to you!” Hearing him say that, Jiang Yuan knew that Zhang Ye definitely had it all planned out already. “I will be waiting to see the viewership ratings report about your second episode!”

Chapter 690 – Controversy Over The Second Episode's Viewership!

Two days later.

The next morning.

The recording studio was ready for the start of the second episode's recording of The Voice.

Zhang Ye took some time and gathered all the staff backstage for a short and simple meeting. "Today, we will record two episodes in a row, but if the conditions are good, we might add another episode in for recording to get the fourth episode out as well. The station's request of our program team has already been made clear to us. They don't request that our program get another record-breaking viewership rating but just hope for stability. As long as it is not lower than the first episode's viewership ratings, it is good enough. That is also my basic requirement I'm asking of all of you, so I hope that everyone can raise their spirits. Put your full concentration on working on the show today."

"Yes!"

"No problem!"

"Don't worry!"

“For sure!”

Everyone agreed in unison.

Zhang Ye gave the order. “Alright, let’s go!”

Amidst all the hubbub, everyone got into their positions and went on standby.

Today’s workload was very heavy. Zhang Ye had already done the necessary preparations. Not only did he communicate in private with the four coaches for a long time beforehand, he also talked to the contestants who were going to appear today. He had to constantly shape the fundamentals and presentation of the show to get it ever closer to the one he had envisioned in his mind. As the executive director, all these factors needed to be considered and he also had to be in full control of the entire program. Nothing could deviate from the plans.

To be honest, Zhang Ye had rather heavy stress on him too. After getting off to a winning start and creating a viewership ratings legend, their starting point was pushed even higher now. The road from here was indeed going to be much more difficult, and as a result, Zhang Ye needed to spend more energy and effort to ensure that the show would not go downhill from here. As for whether they would still be able to set another record high viewership rating, this was not something Zhang Ye could predict anymore. He would leave this to fate. As long as he did his best to make sure the show was good, then everything else should be decided by the market and the audience.

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Online.

After the broadcast of The Voice's premiere episode a few days ago, the talk surrounding The Voice had been discussed less and less. This was a normal trend since no TV show had ever been discussed forever. There was always a peak and a cooling period. Besides, with so many entertainment activities and works in the entire country, such as that newly screened movie that had earned 500 million RMB in the box office, a certain celebrity's divorce, all of that news was not missing from the entertainment circle. It wasn't possible that everyone would pay attention to you on a daily basis. In the face of so much entertainment news, the audience would surely be more attracted to something else each time.

As a result, on Monday and Tuesday, any news of The Voice went by quietly and peacefully as many people were discussing a certain celebrity divorcing for the second time.

When Wednesday came, the talk surrounding The Voice once again gathered momentum as everyone gradually picked up the discussions of the program once more!

Why?

Because the second episode of The Voice was going to be broadcast soon!

On Weibo.

“I’m so looking forward to it!”

“It’s almost time for the second episode of The Voice!”

“It’s has been so long! I’ve been waiting for almost a whole week already, thinking about it every day. It’s finally going to be shown again!”

“Me too. In the past, I didn’t usually watch variety shows. Even if I did, I watched those subbed ones from Korea or America online. After all, their standards and quality are truly better, but The Voice has pulled me back to sitting in front of my TV and instilled confidence back in me regarding our domestically produced variety shows. In the future, I would dare to thump my chest with pride and say that we also have good domestic variety shows!”

“I can’t wait either! Come quickly, episode 2!”

“Do you guys think it will create another viewership ratings record?”

“How suspenseful!”

“Yeah, after all, the first episode was totally logic defying, so it’s not going to be easy for the second episode to do it.”

“For some programs that began without getting much attention due to the promotions not reaching the market, they would be able to slowly increase their viewership ratings and do better with each episode as long as they maintain the program’s quality. Do You Remember is an example of such a program, but The Voice has already penetrated too deeply into the market and has 2.01% of the viewership ratings with its premiere episode. Usually, for these kinds of shows, the later episodes don’t usually perform too well. It’s likely to fall below 2%.”

“But no matter how far it falls, The Voice still won’t get too low a viewership rating!”

“That’s for sure. Zhang Ye is already a veteran of program planning in the television industry. With him around, even if the show is dropping, it won’t be that bad.”

“I don’t feel that The Voice’s viewership ratings will necessarily drop.”

“The key now is whether there will still be any exciting contestants for the blind auditions segment. If they can still get contestants like Luo Yu and Qian Pingfan, then the viewership ratings definitely won’t drop!”

“There aren’t many contestants like them out there.”

“Not many? More like they’re totally rare, don’t you think?”

“It all boils down to the quality of the second episode’s contestants now!”

“Yes. For a lot of the talent shows out there, their premiere episodes usually do well in the viewership ratings but will always drop in the later episodes. This sort of show is too commonly seen, so I’m just afraid that The Voice will also follow in their footsteps. I actually do like this show a lot and is the only variety show I’m following right now, so it better stay strong. If the quality of the show drops too much, then I will have no variety shows to watch anymore!”

The netizens were all discussing fervently, talking about all kinds of things.

Similarly, peers from the industry had also turned their focus on this subject.

Central TV Department 1 was the most anxious and pressured party. They had invited Zhang Ye to join them because they wanted to regain their leading status within the variety show industry. Now that Zhang Ye, along with The Voice’s first episode, had blinded the entire country with a glowing reception, it had made many of the leaders at Central TV Department 1 very excited, while simultaneously worried that they would lose what they had gained. They knew that what they had so far was still not enough to cement their return to the top of the variety world as no variety show would be judged on just one of its episodes. What they needed was the average viewership rating to be good, so even if the first episode’s ratings had defied all logic, if the later episodes did

not do well, it still wouldn't mean that Central TV had made a comeback. It all still hinged on the performance of the show's entire season, so with huge expectations of The Voice, they naturally had more worries as well. Everything depended on if Zhang Ye could keep the viewership ratings stable!

As for the other television stations, they had the same thoughts.

Some of industry insiders were taking a more objective view on The Voice.

"Taking the lead was easy, but holding on to it will prove difficult."

"Yes, it's going to be a real test of Zhang Ye's ability now."

"The first big problem has arrived for The Voice. Let's see if Zhang Ye is able to get past this. I don't have much hope in this case."

"Let's see how it goes in the second episode."

Along with many peers from the television industry, their views were more pessimistic, or rather some of these people were simply waiting for Zhang Ye and The Voice to become the joke. A few of them posted their views on Weibo.

"The first episode's viewership ratings were too much of a fluke!"

“I think so too. It might have happened for the first episode, but that doesn’t mean the second and third episodes will be the same. The Voice’s first episode has seriously over-penetrated into the market, so what comes after will only weaken for sure.”

“I advise everyone not to have too high an expectation that the second episode of The Voice will be like what you all might think it might be!”

“My prediction for the second episode’s viewership ratings is only 1.3% or so. This figure is much closer to the norm of a popular program in the variety industry, the 2-point rating it received for the first episode was way too out of the norm!”

“When Zhang Ye claimed he wanted ‘to see other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene,’ that was only applicable to the first episode. It’s impossible that every episode will have similar viewership ratings, so don’t enshrine Zhang Ye as legendary. Legends don’t last a lifetime!”

Those who had made these claims were mainly the same industry insiders who had previously boycotted Zhang Ye. After the viewership ratings of the first episode were released, they were all left speechless and dumbfounded. At that point in time, none of them stepped forward to say a word, but now that the attention on the first episode of The Voice had passed and with the second episode coming up soon, they timed the opportunity to make their stand known. All of this was for nothing more than to try to regain their face. After all, they didn’t want to lose too badly. Moreover, they were honestly convinced that Zhang Ye and The Voice would

not be able to stay that strong forever!

Chapter 691 – Broadcast!

Thursday night.

Around 8:55 PM.

At Zhang Ye's parents' house, his mother was in the kitchen preparing supper. She was frying some [sausages](#) and chopping the garlic, occasionally coming out to the living room to ask, "Has it started yet?"

Guan Chang, or filled sausage, has been a popular snack in Beijing since the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Traditionally, the sausage, a prepared pork intestine, is stuffed with a paste of flour or starch mixed with spices. The sausage is then boiled and cut into cubes or slices to be fried. In some restaurants, minced pork is also used as stuffing. Little bamboo sticks, instead of chopsticks, are the traditional way of eating the filled sausages.

Zhang Ye answered, "Not yet, there's still 5 minutes."

His mother asked, "It's still the commercials? They're taking too long with that!"

His father urged, "Just get the sausages onto the dining table first, Chenchen is getting hungry waiting for you."

"Right away, right away." Not a moment later, his mother brought out the dish and put it onto the dining table. "Chenchen, come and eat, try the sausages that Grandma fried."

Chenchen went to the dining table and picked up a pair of chopsticks immediately.

Zhang Ye stopped her. “Have you thanked Grandma for cooking this for you yet?”

Chenchen raised her head. “Thank you, Grandma.”

His mother smiled happily. “No need to thank me, just eat.”

Only then did Zhang Ye let Chenchen start eating. He himself also started eating, but he used his hands instead of chopsticks. The sausages were still very hot and he even let out a yell because of that. Then he dipped it into the garlic sauce and threw it directly into his mouth.

Then Chenchen did not take the sausages from her plate but insisted on snatching them from Zhang Ye’s hands. “Give me, Zhang Ye, give me!”

“No, dip it in the sauce yourself!” Zhang Ye rolled his eyes.

His mother sat down. “Why are you fighting with a child? Come, Chenchen, let Grandma dip it in some sauce for you. Do you want [vinegar](#)?”

His father turned the volume of the TV up.

Onscreen, the second episode of The Voice was starting.

Simultaneously, the same event was also occurring in many households across the country.

.....

In a household.

“Honey, get me a cold beer!”

“Drinking again?”

“The Voice is starting, I’ve already been waiting for a week!”

.....

In an alley.

“Brother Sun, you’re leaving so early? Why don’t we play another two rounds.”

“I’m not playing anymore, you guys continue. I have to go back to catch The Voice.”

“Whoa, you’re already past 40 and still watching talent shows?”

“What do you all know? The Voice is different, it’s really fun to watch!”

.....

At some kebab restaurant.

“Waiter.”

“Coming.”

“Please switch the television to The Voice.”

“Sure, sir.”

“Give me another 50 kebab skewers and 5 bottles of beer, cold ones!”

“They’ll be here soon.”

.....

Millions of viewers were already waiting in front of their televisions, their eyes focused on Central TV Department 1’s channel. Everyone wanted to know if the second episode of The

Voice would be able to continue its miraculous run and if Zhang Ye's viewership ratings legend was really just a flash in the pan. In the past two days, a few online comments were rather spot on. The real test of Zhang Ye's standard and The Voice was starting just today. Whether they were a mule or a horse all depended on this second episode!

The introduction music played!

The logo of The Voice appeared!

During the first episode, there was a lot more fanfare, such as the opening theme song and coaches introduction. A lot of the viewing audience thought that it would be the same for the second episode, but what surprised them was that The Voice did not follow the templates of other talent shows. Instead, there wasn't even an opening introduction. In place of it was the fan favorite advertising segment!

When the show started, the focus was immediately on the stage. Zhang Ye had already walked up to the hanging microphone. He recited speedily while looking into the camera, "I-will-not-accept-any-gifts-this-year The-only-gift-I-will-accept-is-Brain Gold
There's-no-need-to-watch-any-TV-shows-this-year The-only-TV-show-you-need-to-watch-is-The Voice..."

A string of advertising messages seemingly flew out from his mouth!

The loud applause from the audience thundered through the

entire studio!

Online, many people who heard this again could only come up with forced smiles!

“Just how did Zhang Ye do it so quickly!”

“Was he aiming to break the speed of sound there?”

“Each time I listen to it, I get more surprised! That mouth of his is really too godly!”

“Damn, Zhang Ye has gotten faster again! I timed it just now and Zhang Ye’s recital of the advertising message today was faster than the first episode’s recital by 0.5 seconds! F**k, he could even go faster than before? He did not even hit his limit yet in the first episode? Still increasing his recital speed? I’m gonna faint!”

“Are you sure?”

“I timed it too! Indeed, he did it faster than before!”

“My timing shows that he was faster by 0.4 seconds!”

“Heavens!”

“Teacher Zhang’s taking this godly speed to the next level!”

“He’s just so godlike! With a godly mouth too!”

“Teacher Zhang, you’re too awesome!”

The opening advertising messages had already made many of the audience members erupt into excitement. Many of the industry insiders who saw this all felt that Zhang Ye and The Voice were being too “violent.” Why “violent”? Because whenever all the other variety shows wished to pull up their viewership ratings by attracting viewers, they would have to try many tricks and strategies, like finding a better pool of contestants, inviting a well-known coach, or giving more thought when creating new ideas for the program, and even by relying on the humor of the host. However, The Voice’s advertising segment that pulled in the viewers only needed to depend on Zhang Ye’s amazingly fast recital speed which would crush all of his fellow peers. It “violently” relied on Zhang Ye’s individual ability to pull in all the viewers’ interest, and this seemingly non-technical ability actually required the most technique to execute. Right now, everyone knew that if they delivered the advertising messages in such a manner, it would definitely raise the viewership ratings by attracting enormous attention and hype to the topic. But even if they knew, there was no host in the industry who could do the same thing! So looking at Zhang Ye continuing to use his unique skill in the second episode of the program, many of the satellite channel industry insiders could only watch and sigh. Unless they could somehow poach Zhang Ye over from Central TV Department 1, they could only watch with envy!

Excitement rose in the air!

The next moment, Zhang Ye started to introduce the first contestant who would come up onstage. The show's pacing was very fast. There were no slow moments as it headed straight for the main event!

The contestant's intro clip started playing!

It was a woman's voice. "Since childhood, my family's living conditions have always been good. My parents are rather strict with me, so I can't do many things. When I went to work, it was also at my parents' company. I know that they wish to nurture me so I can take over the company in the future and have achievements in the business world, but to be honest, that's not what I like. I don't like doing business where people are always scheming against each other. I like to sing, and I want to sing. That's why I've come to the stage of The Voice. I hope to tell my parents that I will choose my own path!"

The female contestant carried the microphone and stepped on stage.

The moment she appeared up on stage, whether it was the live audience or the viewers in front of their TVs, everyone showed slightly shocked expressions!

Why?

Because of this contestant's appearance!

“How beautiful!”

“Damn, a beauty!”

“This person is too beautiful, too beautiful!”

“She carries herself really well!”

“F**k, I’ve always thought that The Voice would only have ugly men and women as contestants! Where did a person with such stunning looks come out from? I thought that The Voice doesn’t care about looks?”

“Yeah, I am also quite disappointed!”

“Could it be that The Voice has already conceded to the traditional format from the second episode? They are going to become just like any other talent show that uses good-looking people as their contestants? And I still thought that The Voice was something new and refreshing! If this contestant only performs averagely, I will not be watching The Voice anymore!”

“Listen to the performance first.”

Many netizens were commenting online while watching the program. As the contestants from the first episode had left a very deep impression on them, many of them already formed

preconceived notions of the contestants. Now that such a beautiful looking female contestant had appeared onstage, they felt a little unused to it!

The female contestant's name was Yuan Tong and had moved Zhang Ye with the song "Blooming" during the preliminary auditions, allowing her to qualify for the next round. However, as another female contestant had performed the same song in the first episode, to avoid repetition, the music arrangement teacher and music director had chosen another song for her after consulting Zhang Ye. It wasn't a love song nor an upbeat song. It was a song that carried some risk if performed in a singing competition as it didn't fit too well to the theme. However, Zhang Ye and his team all believed that Yuan Tong could make it sound good!

The song was—"For My Future Son or Daughter."

"I want a child. I'll teach 'em how write and speak.

"I want a child. I'll teach 'em to be thoughtful and free.

"I want a child. I'll teach 'em forgiveness and mercy.

"I want a child. I'll teach 'em to be selfless and true."

After this female contestant opened her mouth to sing, everyone immediately stopped what they were saying!

An uproar broke out again online!

“What the f**k!”

“That’s friggin’ nice to listen to!”

“This...this singing is too good!”

“F**k, who says that if you look good, you won’t be able to sing? I was nearly misled by you guys! She can also sing very well even if she’s beautiful!”

“Ahem, I take back my words from earlier. It was because of the first episode that I assumed the wrong things. I did not think that there would be any good-looking people appearing on this stage!”

“This person sings as well as Luo Yu! She must also be a key contestant! And she’s even very pretty!”

“The Voice did great! How did they manage to find so many awesome people!?”

At this moment, on the TV screens, Chen Guang and Fan Wenli both pressed the button simultaneously as they both turned around with excitement!

“They’ve turned!”

“There’s still two more coaches to go!”

“Hahaha, how wonderful!”

“Wow, look at Old Chen’s eyes. They’re gleaming at the sight of a pretty lady, heh!”

“Zhang Xia looks like she’s hesitating, I think she’ll turn around soon!”

Yuan Tong was still singing. There was no high notes to hit nor any showy techniques. She simply used a very emotional style of singing to perform this song, or rather she was just singing her feelings. Through this song’s beseeching of one’s future child, she was actually reflecting on her own experiences for the past 20 years of her life. It was performed very well and full of charm!

“My daughter.

“My son.

“I don’t want you to be like me, bad with words.

“I don’t want you to be like me, selfish, harsh, and untoward.

“I don’t want you to be like me, showing off your vanity.

“I don’t want you to be like me...”

Zhang Yuanqi turned!

Zhang Xia glanced sideways and also determinedly hit the button!

All of them had turned!

It was another rare occasion where a contestant earned the approval of the four coaches!

The audience also exploded as everyone started cheering for Yuan Tong, for her beauty and for her singing!

Backstage at the second recording studio site, Zhang Ye was accompanied by Yuan Tong’s parents who did not look like they were too interested, appearing quite obviously unsupportive of their daughter. But when they saw their daughter’s eyes had teared up at the most emotional part of the song, then saw how the four coaches were reacting excited due to her singing, as well as the studio audience’s cheers, Yuan Tong’s mother’s eyes reddened. She quietly wiped away some tears from the corners of her eyes and looked at her husband who had raised his arms high in encouragement of their daughter!

Yuan Tong was crying. When she reached the final verse of the song, as her vibrato ended along with the music, she saw that the four coaches had all turned around. Suddenly, at that moment, she

could not hold her emotions in anymore and covered her mouth and cried. Having held it in for so long, with so many people watching her at the venue, she would naturally be a little more sensitive, and so her tears started falling.

Seeing this, Zhang Xia also teared up a little. Perhaps she was also reminded of some memories since she looked to be in a rather complex state.

Chen Guang still stuck to his old pet phrase as he raised both his arms. “This is truly unbelievable!”

A stunning face!

An experienced singing technique!

A touching voice!

With Yuan Tong’s appearance, the entire stage was lit up again!

.....

The netizens all shouted in succession.

“The singing was too wonderful!”

“I nearly cried listening to that!”

“Me too!”

“I’m already a fan! Yuan Tong is awesome!”

“Supporting you in wanting to walk your own path!”

“Right, don’t go into business! You must carry on singing! It’s your life, so you must make your own choice!”

.....

The several industry insiders suddenly went quiet. One of them was the executive director of a talent show that was on another satellite channel in the same broadcast time slot. He could only silently sigh, knowing that he and many others had been totally underestimating Zhang Ye. When The Voice was not yet broadcast, they’d already been denouncing it and calling it bad. Many of them were not actually trying to bad-mouth it because it was a competitor; they wouldn’t stoop that low. The main reason they had done so was because they truly did not believe that a talent show without any good-looking people could get popular. They felt that this was going against the market trends, but the first episode of The Voice had utterly schooled them regarding this concern. Zhang Ye had made a show that did not have any good-looking people in it and created a viewership rating miracle, shocking all his industry peers and shutting up all those doubters!

And today, Zhang Ye had once again schooled these industry peers with another lesson!

Who said that The Voice would not have any good-looking people on it?

Who had set such a rule? No one did! Zhang Ye did not mention this explicitly before either! He only said that the contestants could join regardless of looks!

If they could sing very well and also have a very good-looking appearance, then that would be all the better. Just like how Yuan Tong was a contestant you wouldn't just find anywhere even if you looked hard. The future development path of Yuan Tong was probably going to be much smoother than Luo Yu or Qian Pingfan, since her foundation was almost perfect and she also had the necessary good qualities!

When there was a misconception that The Voice would only have ugly people joining as contestants, it was all because the audience had wanted to believe it that way. They had a wrong understanding of The Voice and today's first contestant Zhang Ye sent on stage was clearly set up for this. Zhang Ye had his own considerations, and as expected, Yuan Tong had amazed the entire venue and put across a message of truth to everyone—don't ever use your understanding to measure The Voice!

.....

At Zhang Ye's parents' place.

His mother's eyes lit up. "This person is really beautiful and she

sings very well too!”

Zhang Ye laughed. “Yes, Yuan Tong was one of my designated trump cards from the preliminary auditions. I had planned for her to appear in the second episode to shock everyone.”

His mother said, “What is she like?”

“Alright I suppose. Do you mean her personality?” Zhang Ye asked.

His mother asked with concern, “Yes, is her personality good?”

Zhang Ye threw up his hands. “We’ve only talked a little about music and didn’t have much contact after that, so I don’t really know. But I guess she’s alright, she seems to be quite filial. Eh, why are you asking about this?”

His father had already sensed it. “Your mom is just worrying about finding you a partner.”

His mother immediately said, “Yes. This girl is very beautiful and can even sing well. Her family is rather well off too, and although she might not be famous yet, she can slowly work her way up. I think she would match you well.”

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. “Mom, didn’t I tell you not to worry about this matter.”

His mother pouted. “If you don’t want me to worry, then you should find someone. I know that many people in the entertainment circle wed late in their lives, some are even still single in their forties, so you better make sure you don’t learn from them!”

“Just don’t worry so much. Yuan Tong is just considered as an average beauty.” Zhang Ye said, “My future wife will definitely be much more beautiful than her.”

Chenchen who was sitting next to them on the sofa glanced at him for a moment. “...Hur hur.”

His mother doubtfully said, “Is that so?”

Zhang Ye laughed. “Of course, just wait and see.”

He was actually speaking the truth, since Wu Zeqing was indeed much more beautiful than Yuan Tong. Perhaps, since Zhang Ye had seen Wu Zeqing so many times, he did not even take much notice of Yuan Tong from the beginning. He basically did not have any interest in her and it was just his mother who had brought it up and incoherently connected them together, thinking that her son was still unable to find someone.

His father interrupted, “Don’t talk anymore, it’s the next contestant’s turn.” His father was never interested in watching such shows in the first place, neither could he really understand them, but maybe due to his son, he enjoyed it quite a bit. If anyone

spoke loudly, he would say that they bothered his watching of the show.

His mother turned her attention back to the television and did not raise the subject of Zhang Ye finding a partner anymore. She asked anxiously, “Who’s next? Is it a man or a woman? Is the performance good?”

Zhang Ye smiled and kept them guessing. “The next contestant will surely give both of you a great fright. Just watch, I won’t spoil it for you!”

Chapter 692 – Grandpa, Could You Cut It Out!?

At a quarter past 9 PM, the next contestant was about to appear. Having been enticed by Zhang Ye with his description of the contestant, his parents kept their eyes on the TV screen and anticipated who would come next. They wanted to know just how frightening this next contestant would be. Even Chenchen who was still eating the sausages glanced curiously at the screen.

But at this moment, Zhang Ye stood up from his chair. After filling his stomach, he took a napkin and wiped the garlic sauce and oil from his hand. He then went back into his room. He took out his phone and hesitated for a long while but still decided to call the number that was written on a note he had kept in his pocket. He had gotten this from the program team. It was an emergency contact number one of the contestants had put on their application form.

He dialed the number.

Du du. The call went through.

Zhang Ye greeted: “Hello.”

It was a middle-aged man who answered the phone: “Hello, who is this?”

“Is this Mr. Zhou?” Zhang Ye asked.

“That’s he, you are?” The middle-aged man asked, wondering what was going on.

Zhang Ye said: “Are you and your mother together at the moment? I would like to look for Grandma Wang. I’m not sure if it’s convenient for her to answer the phone right now?”

The middle-aged man said: “Looking for my mother? Are you a comrade from the Residents’ Committee? Or the Retirees’ Association?” Maybe it was because of Zhang Ye speaking very formally, the middle-aged man did not make much of it and wasn’t too suspecting. “OK, please wait, I’ll get her.” Then a voice could be heard: “Mother, mother, a call for you.”

About five or so seconds later, someone answered.

It was a little old granny’s voice: “Hello, is this Little Li from the committee?”

Zhang Ye said: “No, Grandma Wang, my name is Zhang Ye.”

“Zhang Ye?” Grandma Wang said while shaking her head. “Did you get the wrong number?”

Zhang Ye said: “I didn’t get the wrong number. I understand that you might not know me, but I’m calling you with a rather presumptuous request. Could I get you to tune in to Central TV Department 1’s channel on TV?”

Grandma Wang did not understand. “Eh?”

Zhang Ye said: “You’ll understand when you see it.”

After saying that, Zhang Ye hung up because he did not know what else to say. He also didn’t know if he should be the one to say it, so he just hurriedly and briefly said a few words.

On the other end.

Grandma Wang was feeling very confused. “Who was that?”

Her son, Mr. Zhou, said in surprise, “You don’t know that person?”

“I don’t know him. He only asked me to take a look at Central TV Department 1’s channel now and then hung up after saying that.” Grandma Wang’s television was on at the moment, but she was currently watching opera. She very much so enjoyed listening to opera.

Mr. Zhou was quite speechless at that. “What did he mean by that? Was it a sales call? A phone scam?”

Grandma Wang said, “I don’t know.”

“What’s there on Central TV Department 1? Oh, it’s Thursday

today, isn't it? I think it's The Voice of China at this time. Many of my colleagues have been telling me how good it is. Eh, wait!" Mr. Zhou suddenly said, "What was the name of the person who called just now?"

Grandma Wang thought for a moment. "He said he was...Zhang Ye?"

Mr. Zhou was stunned. "Isn't Zhang Ye that host? I think he joined Central TV Department 1 and The Voice seems to be produced by him!"

"Host?" Grandma Wang thought, but she did not know any celebrities in person.

Mr. Zhou was feeling very curious, so he switched over to Central TV Department 1. "Look, it's really The Voice. I think it just started not too long ago. Could it really be Zhang Ye who called? That's not possible, he's such a superstar, why would he call our house? Just thinking about that seems impossible already! This is really weird!"

Grandma Wang said, "If it's a scam, then just ignore it. I want to continue watching my opera."

"Can you watch the opera in a while? Let me take a look first." Mr. Zhou wondered about what kind of program The Voice actually was. "This show is very popular right now. Everyone in the country is talking about it. The viewership ratings have won hands down against all other variety shows in the same period.

They also say that the contestants are all very good performers too. My colleagues told me that there was a bicycle repairman in the first episode who sang with an even more womanly voice than a woman could. That voice was really the best. Then there was another contestant...Ah!" As he related to this part, he suddenly cried out in surprise. The words that were coming out from his mouth became stuck in his throat!

Grandma Wang asked, "What's the matter?"

Mr. Zhou was shocked as he pointed at the television screen. His hand was trembling. "F-Father! It's my father!"

"What?" Grandma Wang expression also turned to shock. She turned her focus to the television and stared hard at it. Her eyes swirled with a complex mix of emotions!

Mr. Zhou, who seemingly had seen a ghost, said, "What's my father doing on TV!"

Grandma Wang was silent for a moment, then uttered, "Change the channel!"

"Mother..." Mr. Zhou said.

"Change the channel!" Grandma Wang said firmly.

Mr Zhou said, "Why do you want to change it? Just watch it. You've already divorced my father for seven or eight years years

already. Each time he calls, you always hang up on him. Every time he comes to look for you, you don't even want to open the door for him. Whenever any of our neighbors mention my father's name, you will give them an angry look. Just what are you trying to do? It's not like my father has done something wrong. All he likes is singing, so why can't you get over that after all these years."

Grandma Wang said angrily, "Is that what he calls liking singing? He treats singing like it's his life. When we were still young, your father would carry that guitar of his around every day and form whatever band or groups with his co-workers. If you say that he was young at that time, I'll let it pass, but as we got older, he still did not change. After working at the factory for 20, 30 years, just because he wanted to pursue that dream of his, he took the golden handshake at work and left his job. All the golden handshake payment was good for was a few years of insurance payments, and he was left with no other income. It's not like you don't know how much our family suffered during those years!"

Mr Zhou said, "That still didn't warrant getting a divorce from my father, did it!?"

Grandma Wang resolutely said, "When he sang during his younger days, it was fine. But he's already so old, yet he still keeps on thinking about that dream. Everyone has their destiny, and his is a worker. Why does he still not give up at his age! Does he not understand?! Only young people go on talent shows, what is he thinking stepping in and joining in on the fun?! That singing of his is so terrible, who would like it?"

Mr Zhou seethed, "If you don't want to watch, I will. I have

never really heard my father singing a song before. Every time he tried to sing in the past, you would always pick a quarrel with him!”

Grandma Wang scolded very harshly, but did not actually move from her seat. She remained on the sofa and her gaze was still on the TV set.

.....

Online.

Many of the viewers were also raising a ruckus.

“I’m gonna faint!”

“I’m gonna faint +1!”

“This...this...”

“F**k me, why is there even an old man?”

“I’m blind!”

“Your sister! The composition of the contestants in The Voice is way too complicated! There’s a train driver, a P.E. teacher, a bicycle repairman, and now even a retiree?”

“Teacher Zhang, I bow to you!”

“Pfft! Does it need to be this funny?”

“At that age, he still wants to join a talent show?”

“This grandpa is really courageous, he can still sing at that age?”

“Surely this must just be meeting the requirement of the number of contestants, right?”

“Could he be intending to perform a [square dance](#)?”

The viewers in front of their TV sets found it both laughable and pitiful. They'd seen strange things, but never had they seen something this strange. A 60 year old still coming to take part in a talent show competition? And it's even a singing competition? In all the other singing shows, even a 40 year old would be rare and would be considered an overaged contestant. They were all basically just contestants who would end up having that one appearance in the competition before getting eliminated. After all, people at that age really weren't in the condition for singing, not to mention what it would be like for a 60-year-old grandpa!

Would you cut it out!?

Grandpa, could you please cut it out!?

Chapter 694 – Zhou Danian! Zhou Danian!

You might be wondering where is chapter 693? Here's a bit of clarification regarding this discrepancy.

When IRAS was first translated, the chapter count starts at 0. That was the chapter count until chapter 692. After that, the translation team shifted to Qidian International. Unfortunately, the chapter count starts at 1, instead of 0.

Technically, chapter 692 from the old site, is chapter 693 in the new site. Hence, i've opted to delete Chapter 693 since it is basically the same chapter as Chapter 692. The story continues at Chapter 694. Basically nothing was lost.

The contestant's intro clip played:

A 60-year-old grandpa appeared onscreen.

"My name is Zhou Danian, everyone just calls me Old Zhou. About my life, I've really been a failure. When I was young, my dream was to be a singer. Even after many decades, my dream never changed. Many of my friends say that I must be mad, criticizing that I'm not mature and even my spouse who had been part of my life for many years filed for a divorce seven, eight years ago over my pursuit of my dream. She said that I couldn't recognize what was real and what was a dream. She said that people our age shouldn't be qualified to dream anymore. But I will never believe that, why is it that only young people have the right to pursue their dreams? Why can't we old people also have a lifetime dream that we've been working with determination toward? I came to this stage today in hopes that my ex-wife and son can see me, that my ex-bandmates whom I had been playing music together with for so many years but given up now can see

me, that those who tell me that I should not have such dreams can see me. I want to tell them that even though I might not turn out to be a capable singer, and I may have been wrong all my life, but I, Zhou Danian, have never given up. From my twenties to my sixties, I've been pushing forward for 40 years, working hard for 40 years, but I have never given up!"

The audience was taken by surprise.

"60 years old?"

"He's really that old?"

"F**k, I just thought this man looked old."

"This is making me dizzy. He's already 60?"

Even the industry insiders who were watching The Voice were feeling a genuine sense of powerlessness. They could not understand what Zhang Ye was trying to do. How did he even manage to get an old man like this from the preliminary auditions?

The four coaches appeared onscreen looking a little lost, unsure of why the audience was so surprised. As only the four of them had their backs facing to the stage, they couldn't see the contestants or know if they were a man or a woman, how tall they were, their looks, or age. They were totally clueless.

.....

At Grandma Wang's house.

Mr. Zhou drew a deep breath. "Mother, my father, he..."

Grandma Wang stayed silent.

In the past, Mr. Zhou also could not understand his father. He felt that the reason why his family had come to this point was due to his parents' unrealistic dreams and aspirations. His parents argued very often and even ended up divorcing. Although he did not say it explicitly, he had always blamed his father for this, thinking that it was because his father had handled everything wrong. But now, after listening to his father's intro clip, Mr Zhou was suddenly at a loss for words.

.....

On screen.

Under the gaze of the countless TV viewers, Zhou Danian stepped up onto the stage. He held the microphone in his hand and walked up in a slow manner. He even had to climb the stairs one step at a time, unable to go two steps at once. From this, it could be seen that Zhou Danian was really getting old and no longer as strong as a younger person.

Can this grandpa really do it?

This old man could really sing?

Everyone had the same question on their mind.

The lights dimmed. 3, 2, 1... the music blared!

It was the strumming of guitars. Even though the melody sounded a little different, it was still very familiar. Those who heard it immediately knew that this was the tune of an early rock song by Zhang Yuanqi that was very popular. A lot of people had sung it before, but never had they heard an old man singing it!

"It's 'I Don't Believe'?"

"Rock?"

"Heavens! The grandpa is going to sing a rock song?"

"What is this, just what is going on here?"

"I was expecting a song from the '70s, how did it turn out to be a rock song? A person that age can also sing such a mainstream pop song?"

"Will that work?"

"It's definitely not going to be good on the ears! I have no clue

what to say!"

"It can't possibly be good, can it?"

"He even got divorced because of this? That's really not worth it!"

"If he sang an old song, it would be fine. But a rock song? You were already on the wrong path in the first place, yet you persisted for 40 years? What's the point of that?"

"Rock essentially belongs to the younger people!"

On screen, Zhou Danian was faced with the doubtful looks of the audience but did not seem to care. He had already long since gotten used to it, as he had been through all this countless times. Under the gaze of all these doubtful looks, he raised the microphone to his mouth and expressed all his experiences and emotions into the singing of the song. This was a song that he wanted to sing for himself!

He opened his mouth.

His voice came out.

"After all the effort, all I could do was return in failure.

"After all the fighting, all I could do was cry wishing for my dreams.

"After all the thinking, why is my life so lowly?

"After all the lamenting, why is my voice turning haggard!"

One year...

After another...

Yet another year...

Year by year, he grew older. Year by year, he became more bleary-eyed. Zhou Danian was just like how the lyrics were written—he had never had any success in his lifetime before!

The television audience suddenly fell silent!

At the live venue of The Voice, it also suddenly became quiet!

Many people were so surprised that their mouths could not stay closed. They were all shocked by that mature and gravelly bass voice. They simply could not believe their hearing, that this voice was coming out from the mouth of a 60-year-old man!

Likewise, Zhou Danian's son was also shocked at this. Both his eyes were staring wide at the television and he could not even speak coherently anymore. "This, my dad...this..."

Grandma Wang was looking at her ex-husband on TV, as memories flashed in front of her eyes.

"How old are you already!"

"I don't want to just give up like that."

"What's wrong with you! Can't you just accept your fate?"

"I won't give in!"

"Even if you don't accept, you still have to accept! Just spend our days peacefully and stop harping about your dreams!"

"I've only had this one dream in my lifetime, can't you just support me for once?"

"I've had enough! We're going to get a divorce!"

"Xiaoyun! Let me try again! Let me try it for the last time! I can do it for sure!"

"Don't say any more. It doesn't matter how many times you try it! That is not the life you were meant for!"

Suddenly, right after Zhou Danian's bassy voice took a breath, he

screamed in a high-pitched voice, with the power of a bomb exploding!

"I don't believe that my life is worse than others!

"I don't believe that my luck is worse than others!

"I don't believe that my path is always tough!

"I don't believe that my dreams will never come true!"

The screaming got higher and higher pitched, inflaming every household that was tuned in on their televisions! It was too explosive!

"I don't believe that my life is worse than others!

"I don't believe that I have no talent!

"I don't believe that I'm destined to be a lowly person!

"I don't believe that my songs will be left unanswered forever!!!"

The coaches could not longer hold themselves back anymore!

Zhang Yuanqi turned!

Zhang Xia turned!

Chen Guang turned!

Fan Wenli turned!

The four coaches all hit their buttons and turned around within one second of each other. If a voice like that could not earn their approval, then nothing would!

However, when they saw the contestant, the four coaches all broke down!

Fan Wenli screamed, "Ah!"

Zhang Xia also had a fright. "Aiyo, my god!"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "It's a grandpa?"

Chen Guang held his head in his hands, looking like he couldn't accept it. "Holy shit!"

When they were listening to this voice with the backs facing the stage, they could hear that the contestant had some age and life experience from the way he sang with his mature and gravelly voice. But even so, it only sounded like a 40-year-old or so, not 60 or above. Who would have thought that it would be an old man!

What they saw had truly given the four coaches a shock. This was really just too surprising! This person sang so well! If anyone told them that they were listening to a 60-year-old grandpa perform when their backs were turned, they would never have believed it! Besides, this was a rock song!!

The power required in a rock song, the soul and emotions, all of these were expressed fully by the old man. Everyone who heard it could feel their blood boiling with excitement!

"Heavens! Heavens! Heavens!"

"Holy shit!"

"How awesome! "That was such a strong performance!"

"This grandpa is so damn cool!"

"Ahhh! I've got goosebumps all over my body!"

"How cool! This grandpa is really too awesome!"

"F*ck me, how did he sing it so well! His vocals seem to be even more aggressive than a young man! Is he really a 60-year-old grandpa? Now it feels more like he's just 16!"

"Awesome!"

"The Voice is awesome!"

"This stage is too attractive! This is what music is about! This is what you call singing!"

The audience cheered!

Everyone was shouting excitedly. On screen, many of the audience members could be seen standing up and holding up their hands, waving them around crazily, feeling very pumped up from the performance!

At this moment, the music slowed down as the drum kicks faded away.

When the audience was thinking that Zhou Danian would repeat the chorus and let the rhythm pump up the audience again, the music began to slow instead. The original version of Zhang Yuanqi's "I Don't Believe" arrangement and lyrics were changed by Zhou Danian. He added in a conclusion, a type of response lyrics into the ending.

Zhou Danian's face looked a little haggard, his voice sounding very light yet deep. Compared to his screaming earlier, it sounded like he was mumbling to himself as he sang:

"Perhaps my life is worse than others."

"Perhaps I really have no talent."

"Perhaps I'm destined to be a lowly person."

"Perhaps songs will be left unanswered forever."

It was the end of the song!

The music slowly came to an end as well!

Zhang Yuanqi was already leading everyone to stand up and giving her sincerest applause!

Everyone in the studio also stood up with warm applause for him!

.....

Hearing her ex-husband screaming on the show, Grandma Wang did not seem to have much of a reaction. But when he starting singing the parts of his rhetorical answers of "perhaps," Grandma Wang immediately held her face in her hands and unexpectedly started crying. She was crying so hard that it sounded like she would not stop at anytime soon.

Her son said, "Mother! So...my father sings this well!"

Grandma Wang pressed her hands against her eyes, unable to stop crying. "Old Zhou! Wu wu wu wu!"

The feud between his parents, the complex relationship between them. As their son, he might not ever fully understand all of it, but when he saw his mother at this moment, he could guess that, perhaps she had already forgiven his father. Perhaps she already understood his father!

Dong dong dong!

The door was being knocked on.

When Mr. Zhou went to open the door, he saw his old neighbor excitedly shouting, "Little Zhou, your father's on TV! Your father's on TV!"

Mr. Zhou said, "I saw it!"

The old neighbor said, "Did your mother see it as well?"

"We're both watching," Mr. Zhou replied. "My mother is feeling a little emotional right now!"

Then some footsteps came thumping from the stairwell. Another old neighbor who looked to be past 50 years old came over, shouting, "Sister Wang! Your spouse's on TV! He sang really well! He sang really well!! I never knew my Brother Zhou had such a hidden talent! So his singing is actually this good! Did you see it, Sister Wang? The four coaches all turned around for Brother Zhou! You have a star in your family! Brother Zhou's really great!"

When the other neighbors heard the commotion, they too came out into the corridor.

"What's happening?"

"What happened?"

"Quickly go and watch Central TV Department 1! Old Zhou's on a TV show!"

"What?"

"Are you sure?"

"Central TV Department 1? Isn't that The Voice?"

"Yeah, Old Zhou went and performed a song! He sang great!"

"Really? Aiyo!"

"I must go and watch the rerun!"

The phone in their house started to constantly ringing. Many of their relatives and friends were all calling Grandma Wang, and even an ex-bandmate of Zhou Danian from his younger days called. They had not expected that, years after they had given up, Zhou

Danian had actually continued with determination to sing and perform. They spoke to Grandma Wang for a very long time, saddened by what had happened but also feeling happy at the same time for Zhou Danian!

40 years!

After 40 years of determination, Zhou Danian had finally proven himself on the stage of The Voice. He had finally fulfilled that long-awaited dream, so what else could he be happier about than this?

On TV, the coaches' arguing segment finished. The coaches were all fighting over the contestant, but it ended up with the original singer of "I Don't Believe," Zhang Yuanqi, successfully pulling Zhou Danian over to her team!

Chen Guang felt so regretful about this that he slammed his hand onto the table, but still ended up raising both his arms to lead the audience to shout for Zhou Danian. "Let us all show our respect to the man who has not given up on his dreams of being a musician after years and years! He sang very well! This is the first time I've heard a rock song that moved me so much! It's also the voice that touched me the most! No matter what happens from here, Grandpa Zhou, you'll always be the champion of The Voice in my heart!"

"Zhou Danian!"

"Zhou Danian!"

"Zhou Danian!"

"Zhou Danian!"

The entire studio audience's blood was boiling passionately. They hailed him in unison, creating an extremely impressive atmosphere in the venue!

Chapter 695 – The Second Episode's Viewership Ratings Released!

The second episode was on fire!

The Voice was once again so popular!

After the program's broadcast ended at 10:30 PM, the topic of discussion online was again focused on The Voice. The threads and Weibo posts regarding the program were exponentially soaring. If described on a linear graph, the angle of elevation would be at 10 or 20 degrees before the program began. But starting from 9 PM, the angle of elevation was almost at 90 degrees. The feast of The Voice was once again spreading through the Internet. Countless people were going crazy and screaming for The Voice once more!

"The second episode was amazing to watch!"

"I love Yuan Tong!"

"Who cares about Yuan Tong!"

"Yeah, Grandpa Zhou was the awesome one!"

"Supporting this up like crazy, I really love Grandpa Zhou as well!"

"How crazy is this! Grandpa Zhou was rockin' 'n' rollin'!"

Countless Likes for that!"

"This episode is very impressive too! Who says that The Voice's second episode might not meet everyone's expectations? It's clearly a good surprise! And obviously as awesome as the first episode! I should've known that Teacher Zhang would never let us down! Why? There is no why! It's simply because he is Zhang Ye! This name is basically a seal of quality and is synonymous with creating miracles!"

"Having watched so many of Zhang Ye's programs like Lecture Room, Zhang Ye's Talk Show and The Voice, I'm beginning to realize how great Zhang Ye is!"

"I'd heard of Zhang Ye's name some time ago and knew a little about him, but it was only through The Voice that I started liking him, though I've heard that his reputation isn't very good?"

"Pfft, it's far worse than 'not very good'!"

"Haha, has Teacher Zhang ever had a reputation before?"

"For him, he's always 'fighting' with his fellow peers, and many people in the industry can't wait for him to be brought down, so it would be strange if anyone actually had a good opinion of him. But to us common folk, Zhang Ye is still quite a good person. He's loyal, honest, capable, and dares to do what he says. Let me just put it this way for you, my friend. In the entertainment, literary, educational, and crosstalk circles, Zhang Ye is the only person to have scolded or offended almost half of all his peers, but still

survived well in these industries. No one could do anything about this guy at all! Just think about it. From all of that alone, you can see how capable Zhang Ye is. If it were any other celebrity, if they even offended someone from just one industry, they would probably have been condemned many times already, let alone offending so many people from so many industries! Only Zhang Ye has been an exception, that's why so many people are calling him a 'wonder' of the entertainment circle, because this guy has truly been too wondrous!"

"The Voice is really a program of very high standards!"

"After the second episode has been broadcast, there shouldn't be anymore doubters of The Voice, right? I'm afraid there shouldn't even be the slightest bit of doubt to be found around here anymore!"

"Face-smacking Zhang is face smacking again!"

"I can already feel the pain of those industry insiders!"

"Hehe, that might not be true. Many of Zhang Ye's industry peers are his lifetime adversaries, so they won't just stop doubting because of this incident. I'm quite sure they still have many people who won't give up just yet. They're probably waiting for the release of the viewership ratings for The Voice's second episode at this moment. After all, the statistics reflect the situation in the most practical sense!"

"I'm waiting for it too!"

"I wonder how high the second episode be."

"The Voice is way ahead at the moment, so if there's anyone who could beat The Voice's first episode's record of the viewership ratings for the past three years, then I'm afraid that it can only be The Voice itself!"

.....

The next day.

At Central TV Tower.

In The Voice's program team office.

When Zhang Ye reached the office, almost all of his colleagues were already there. Everyone had arrived very early today and congregated to discuss the last night's broadcast. The second episode's recording was finished several days ago, including the blind auditions for the third and fourth episodes. The program team staff had watched all of these in the recording studio, so logically they shouldn't have been so excited about the broadcasted episode. However, there was an essential difference between watching it live and on television because the feeling and atmosphere were totally different. What was broadcast on television had gone through the editing process first, with the contestants' intro clips and their interviews added in and the overall pace of the episode optimized. The final broadcast footage was radically different from watching it live. Together with post-

production color correction added, the quality and atmosphere were raised by several levels when watching it on television. As a result, when the staff watched it, they also felt very excited, especially when Zhou Danian's segment came up. Many of them even cried as it was so moving.

"Director Zhang!"

"You're here?"

"Good morning, Director Zhang."

A few of them greeted.

Ha Qiqi came up and said, "Director Zhang, last night's episode was edited great!"

Zhang Ye laughed. "Using my recommendations when editing, the effects turned out rather well, didn't it? The suggestion you had before had a much slower pace. If we had done it that way, the audience definitely would not have approved of it."

Ha Qiqi gave a wry smile. "My suggestion was just in accordance with the industry's recommended practices, but when I saw the edit based on your suggestion and guidance, I realized that the recommended practices of our industry are really getting...old-fashioned."

Zhang Ye said, "That might not be true, since every program has

its own style and rhythm. As long as we find a suitable approach, it should be good enough." When it came to the production of The Voice, whether it be the recording or post-production processes, Zhang Ye had strictly adhered to the version from his previous world. He fully trusted and respected the style of the version that had matured and been accepted by the audience of his previous world.

Little Wang, who was not too concerned about the post-production or editing, quickly asked, "Are the viewership ratings out yet, Director Zhang?"

Zhang Ye said, "I don't think so."

Wu Yi gulped. "Do you think that the second episode will surpass the first one?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "Who can ever predict something like that? There's really no point in thinking about or analyzing it so much. We can only see if the audience will accept it and wait for the final tabulation of the statistics."

At around 10:30 AM.

The viewership rating statistics for Thursday's variety shows were released!

Zhang Ye was in his office when he found out the news. It was Little Wang who who hurriedly came knocking on his door to tell

him about it. "Director Zhang! Director Zhang! It's released, it's been released!"

Zhang Ye smiled. "You scared me for a second there."

Little Wang was very excited. "Quickly take a look at the viewership ratings!"

"Let me take a look then." Zhang Ye took the viewership ratings report Little Wang handed to him. When he saw the first row, the words The Voice of China were written there!

The Voice's second episode viewership ratings: 2.11%!

Building on the ratings of the first episode, it had increased by another 0.1%!

It must be known that this was actually an absolutely astonishing result. That's because, of this world's variety shows, most of them only got viewership ratings of around 0.5%, so an increase of 0.1% was clearly not a small amount!

Zhang Ye smiled a little. "It's quite alright."

Little Wang however did not feel that it was quite alright. Outside, among all the other staff of The Voice, no one else thought it was quite alright either. To them, the result was basically defying all common sense and everyone was getting extremely excited over it. The first episode had already broken the

2-point rating! But the second episode had set yet another new, national record in the viewership ratings of variety shows in recent years! It had utterly defeated all of the other variety shows in the same time slot! The release of the second episode's viewership ratings had given a strong boost to their program team and Central TV Department 1. Only at this moment did they finally have the courage to say that Central TV Department 1 had made a strong return to the variety scene and reclaimed its position as Big Brother! And the hero of this victory was no doubt Zhang Ye. Zhang Ye had used a show that no one took seriously, and surprisingly led Central TV to defiantly sweep the entire domestic variety show industry!

No one could stop them!

No one could compare to them!

This was absolute carnage!

It was a battle that no others had a chance to win!

.....

Online.

The congratulatory messages came flooding in in the tens of thousands!

"Although it was expected, it still came as a surprise!"

"Not only did the second episode's viewership rating not drop, it even increased by 0.1%!"

"That's too frightening! The Voice is going to be unstoppable at this rate!"

"Damn! F**k!"

"Come and see, quickly! The Voice is defying all common sense again!"

"Hahaha, those industry insiders who constantly criticize The Voice can finally give up! Their statements will express: 'We will take some days off to recharge. When Zhang Ye is out with another new work, we will be back again. A lifetime of criticism, a lifetime of insults, we will never give up, we will never waver!'"

"Congratulations Teacher Zhang!"

"How exciting!"

"In recent years, many people have been saying that Central TV Department 1 is getting old and no longer has its status like back in its glorious past. But they seem to have forgotten that a starving camel is still bigger than a horse. What Central TV Department 1 lacked was probably only someone great like Zhang Ye who can turn the tide for them. Today, after staying silent for some years, Central TV Department 1 is finally back! The once Big Brother of

the variety world is finally making a comeback!"

"The giant is attacking again! Beware, all satellite channels!"

"I'm delighted, Face-smacking Zhang's nth battle with his industry peers has him walking away with the last laugh again!"

"With the excitement of The Voice, the variety show industry will once again warm up. Zhang Ye has not only saved Central TV Department 1, he has saved the entire variety world!"

"Central TV Department 1 joining hands with Zhang Ye, the largest television network in the industry together with the most outstanding program planner of the industry, who could stop them?"

"Congratulations, The Voice has set another record!"

"2.11% ! You are really goddamn going 'to see all other summits dwarfed, and savor the scene'!"

"The legend continues!"

"The Voice fully deserves this honor!"

"Teacher Zhang, well done!"

"Really awesome! An awesome show! Awesome contestants! And also, an awesome host! This day will surely be forever remembered in the history of the variety world! This is certainly the era that great heroes will emerge from! Starting today, the variety world has officially stepped into the 'Era of Zhang Ye'!"

"He who gains Zhang Ye can rule the world!"

.....

In the office.

Zhang Ye was checking his rankings on the Celebrity Rankings Index website. In the B-list celebrity rankings, he immediately spotted his current position.

Third from last!

Not too long ago, he was in last place, but after two episodes of The Voice, Zhang Ye had been soaring in popularity and jumped two spots up on the B-list rankings in just a short time! It should be known that the gap between the celebrities in the B-list was much larger than those in the C-or D-lists, the disparity between each placing was much greater. Just from Zhang Ye's promotion from the C-list to the B-list rankings, it could be seen how difficult it was. He had spent a long period of time increasing his popularity score before he successfully got into the B-list rankings. But now, after just a short time of two episodes, Zhang Ye as a host of The Voice, who although did not have much appearance time, with his show of reciting those advertising messages, his popularity had

once again soared. This was very quick for the fact that he was in the B-list rankings!

At the beginning of the year, Zhang Ye had been thinking of trying to aim for becoming a B-list celebrity. He would have been satisfied as long as he could get into the B-list rankings. But who knew that just after a short two months, not only did Zhang Ye reach his goal, he was already heading straight for the A-list celebrity rankings! Although there was still a long way to go, his momentum was obvious. He was already safe from dropping down into the C-list rankings due to his instability and need not worry about being overtaken by Chen Ye anymore!

The show was on fire!

His popularity was soaring!

After all these days of setbacks and busy days, Zhang Ye's mood today was the best. He was humming a song in his office, finally able to get a breather. Zhang Ye was very satisfied of his own performance during this time. After getting past all the hard work and tiredness from working, he was already reaping the rewards!

Although the people who did not like him still continued to dislike him, and the industry peers he had offended were still aiming for him to fall, Zhang Ye did not care about any of those. He clearly understood that for a celebrity in the entertainment industry, the most important thing was popularity. Popularity and fame were the bases that these celebrity needed to get a say in things. Nothing else mattered!

Chapter 696 – The Higher Education Entrance Examination Board's Invitation!

Viewership ratings of The Voice's second episode had slapped many people's faces once again!

The people loved it!

The media were fighting to get their coverage out!

The industry was silent in unison!

Those who were waiting to laugh at Zhang Ye and The Voice, hoping that the show's second episode would plunge, were also made to shut up. Some people even sneakily deleted their Weibo posts or forum comments that cast doubt onto Zhang Ye and his new program, making it seem like nothing had been said at all.

It was business as usual.

Earth still continued to spin.

At this point, the battle between Zhang Ye and a part of the industry was laid to rest.

.....

In the afternoon.

At the bottom of the television station tower, at a restaurant on the northern side of Bayi Lake, Zhang Ye paid out of pocket and gave another celebratory meal to everyone in the program team.

"Director Zhang, a toast to you."

"Alright, but I'll use tea on behalf of beer."

"It's the weekend tomorrow, do we still have work to do?"

"No, there's nothing else. Everyone will have their full days off to rest for a few days!"

"Oh!"

"Great!"

"We can finally get some rest!"

The Voice was already progressing as planned. Whether it was the production process or the viewership ratings, there was nothing to worry about anymore. Everything was heading towards the best possible outcome. It was all in control of the hands of Zhang Ye and his team. At this moment, the entire program team staff could finally all relax. Their days of being pressured by the deadlines and stressed out by work were finally over!

A middle-aged female editor of the program team said, "Director Zhang, I want to inform you about this in advance. In a few days, I might have to take two days off as my son is getting ready for his college entrance exam. Since my husband is too busy, I will have to stay and help him revise and make a last sprint to the college entrance examination. And there's still meals to be cooked too. I'm going to be so busy in the next few days."

Zhang Ye wondered, "The college entrance exam has not started yet?"

"Not yet, it's only the beginning of June now," the female editor said.

"When is the college entrance exam?" Zhang Ye asked, feeling unsure about it.

AD Zhang Zuo thought that Zhang Ye was just joking, so he laughed. "The college entrance exam is held at the end of June every year. Director Zhang, did you forget because you've been too busy?"

"Late June?" Zhang Ye repeated.

Ha Qiqi said, "Yes, it's only about a little more than ten days from now."

He didn't forget, nor was he playing dumb. Zhang Ye really did

not know. In his previous world, the college entrance examination had been changed some years back to fall on usually the 7th or 8th of June. It had always been like that ever since. After he had been suspended from Peking University, Zhang Ye hadn't been paying much attention to news like this as he had been very busy with The Voice's production work, so he even thought that the college entrance exam was already over. Only now did he find out that the date of this world's college entrance exam was slightly different from his previous world's. The college entrance exam questions and the order of subjects being tested were going likely going to be different over here as well then.

Wu Yi said, "Sister Li, how's your son doing academically?"

Sister Li said, "It's quite good, but our home does not fall under Beijing's household registration, even though my son goes to school in Beijing. For the exam, we would have to go back to our old place. That's why I'm feeling quite worried."

Ha Qiqi said, "Isn't it the same wherever you take the exam?"

Sister Li waved her hands. "It's not the same, not the same at all. These days, the questions are all set independently by the provinces. The Beijing college entrance exam is always easy every year. The admission cutoff point is also lower, so there's definitely less pressure. But it's not the same for other provinces, some are more difficult and some are even easier, so it all depends on your luck."

Ha Qiqi could not understand why. "The Beijing examination is easier?"

Sister Li snorted. "Yes, much more easier too."

Zhang Ye asked with a smile, "Has your son expressed the university he would like to get into?"

She nodded and said with some pride in her voice, "His first choice is Peking University."

Ha Qiqi sounded somewhat impressed as she said, "Then your son must be very academically inclined!"

"He's not too bad as long as he can fulfill his potential. Then there's a good chance." The female editor said, "If my son really gets into Peking University, then I will treat everyone to a feast! That's a promise."

Zhang Zuo smiled and said, "Sister Li, you should be treating Director Zhang to a feast instead. He's the one who is a true Chinese Department lecturer and Math Department associate professor at Peking University."

Sister Li immediately smiled. "I will definitely be treating. I was still hoping that after my son gets admitted into Peking University, Director Zhang would be able to look after him."

Zhang Ye shrugged while smiling and said, "I've already been suspended for the past semester, so I doubt that I would be able to go back to teach this year. But if your son does apply for the

Chinese or Math Department, I still do know quite a few teachers personally, so if there's any problems, they would help me look out for him. Let's talk about that when it happens."

"Since you've already given me your word, let me toast you." Sister Li looked happy, then she picked up her glass of orange juice and clinked it against Zhang Ye's glass.

Zhang Ye said, "I hope your son will be able to get what he wants."

Suddenly, his cell phone starting buzzing inside his pocket. It was a call.

When he took it out to check the number, the caller ID showed Pan Yang's name—the Dean of the School of Mathematical Sciences. He found it strange that Dean Pan would call him at such a time, so he told everyone at the table to continue without him first and excused himself. He went outside to answer the call.

Zhang Ye: "Hello?"

Pan Yang: "Hello, Professor Zhang."

Zhang Ye: "Dean Pan, don't address me like that, just call me Little Zhang."

Pan Yang: "Hur hur, then I will call you Teacher Zhang instead. Are you outside?"

Zhang Ye: "I was just eating lunch, what is it that you're looking for me for?"

Pan Yang: "There's something, but it's difficult to explain over the phone. Shall we meet up instead?"

Zhang Ye: "What time?"

Pan Yang: "It's best if we could meet now."

Zhang Ye: "So rushed? It might not be possible now, I'm still not off work yet."

Pan Yang: "Oh, I remember now. You've recently created a new TV show and it seems like it's doing rather well in the nation as well now, isn't it? Hmm, then why don't you tell me when you will be free? What time do you finish work?"

Zhang Ye: "Why don't you tell me what's the matter first so that I won't feel so unsettled."

After a moment's pause, Pan Yang said: "Alright then, it's actually fine to tell you over the phone since it's not too big an issue. I'm looking for you mainly regarding this year's college entrance exam papers in Beijing."

Zhang Ye was taken aback: "Huh?"

Pan Yang said: "I have been appointed as the supervisor of this year's question setting team for the Beijing college entrance exam. The questions for the examination were already set and ready for the Mathematics, Chinese Literature, English Language, Arts, and Science sections, including a few alternate question sets. But we have suddenly encountered a situation in which all of those question sets were not approved by the board. The Beijing college entrance exam has never been too difficult. It was going to be the same this year, so the leaders on the Board of Education wanted to add more difficulty to it. If they had let us know earlier, it would have been fine since everyone could've discussed and slowly refined the exam standards. But we don't have much time anymore. The college entrance exam will take place in just over ten days. The tests have to be ready before that, which means we have to confirm the rough draft by next Monday at the latest. That leaves us with just around three days to plan, get approval from the Board, and settle the printing of the papers. It seems like we won't be able to make it in time. That's why the question setting team members are all reaching out for help from their friends right now. The more people we have, the faster we can get it done. The first person I thought of when I knew our Mathematics section needed someone was you."

Zhang Ye said nervously: "Dean Pan, you have a group of professors, deans, and PhDs there with you, surely it wouldn't trouble you all to increase the difficulty level of the exam's questions, would it?"

Pan Yang: "It's different. Of course it would be easy to increase the difficulty. We could just grab anyone from our team to set an exam consisting of questions that even a research student would not be able to solve. That would definitely be easy, but it's different

for setting questions for the college entrance exam. The difficulty is not done for the sake of causing trouble to the students; it's just to filter out the students to pick out who is good. That is why the question not only needs to have value, it also needs to be presented so that a high school student would be able to solve it with their knowledge and understanding. That's not an easy thing to do, do you understand? Suppose I throw a mathematical conjecture into the exam. Then the questions would surely be very difficult, but the students definitely couldn't answer it, and even I wouldn't be able to solve it, so what's the point in that? Increasing the difficulty is not the objective, what we want is to screen the examinees."

"I see," Zhang Ye responded vaguely.

Pan Yang: "So what do you say? Would it be convenient for you to join us?"

Zhang Ye: "I've never set exam questions before. It seems like you really trust me."

Pan Yang laughed: "But I've seen the problems that you've given before."

"Oh? What problems did I give?" Zhang Ye did not remember.

"The few problems you gave when you were at Experimental Primary School. Those were quite interesting and had a standard of difficulty to them. It's also philosophical in nature and quite interesting at the same time," Pan Yang said.

Zhang Ye sighed: "But those are elementary math questions."

Pan Yang laughed loudly: "Don't underestimate that. It's hardest to set questions for elementary math. If you ask me to make a question at my own level, I can design it to be interesting and good, but that's because I am at this level and I know what is difficult and what is easy for people like me. But if you need me to set a question for the elementary level, then I will truly be at my wits' end. To me, those questions are all the same, they're all too simple. Because of that, it becomes harder to differentiate between what's hard and easy. On this front, you have an advantage as you are able to bring yourself down to their level of thinking to understand the difficulty level for them. This is a quality that any excellent exam question setter must have, and from those few questions of yours, it already proves that you are really much better at setting questions than us. Otherwise, I wouldn't have come to you for help."

Zhang Ye jokingly said: "You're praising me to the high heavens. I feel like if I didn't agree, I would be letting you down."

Pan Yang: "Then it's settled."

Zhang Ye confirmed: "All you want are difficult questions, right?"

Pan Yang acknowledged: "But solvable within the context of an examinee, though we prefer it to be as difficult as possible!"

"Are you sure? What if the questions are too difficult, what then?"

Won't everyone curse me to death?" Zhang Ye had some concerns about this.

Pan Yang was tickled: "The question setter for the college entrance exam has always been a scapegoat. If you make the questions too easy, examinees from other provinces and autonomous regions will scold you, claiming that the Beijing question setter has low standards and how well they would do if they took their exam here instead. But if you make it too difficult, the Beijing examinees will scold you, saying that you have something against them. So no matter what, you won't be able to escape criticism. That's also a reason why many teachers do not like being appointed to the college entrance examination's question setting team."

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. "Then why did you still ask me?"

Pan Yang's answer left Zhang Ye annoyed but amused. "You're still afraid of being scolded? Online, on TV, in the media, has any day passed without you getting scolded by a multitude of people?"

Zhang Ye: "—No comment."

Pan Yang said: "Besides, every province will be setting their own questions and determining their own admission cutoff points. If a province's exam questions are too difficult, nobody will do well and the mean will also be low. Then the entry cutoff points will also be lower and it will all become relatively the same, so that is still going to be a fair assessment. We are not purposely trying to turn away examinees here, rather trying to see their standards. The standard of Beijing's exam has long been criticized by people,

so the Board has hardened its heart this year and wants to bring a change to the style and thought behind the exam questions. That is why I think you're free to unleash whatever you can think of, regardless of how difficult it is. We're just afraid that it won't be difficult enough! I am very curious about the type of questions you will create if you were assigned to present the last three major questions of the Mathematics section of the exam."

Zhang Ye thought for a bit then said: "Alright then, let me consult with my director at work first."

Pan Yang: "It's rather urgent, so try to give me your answer by today."

"Sure," Zhang Ye said.

Actually, Zhang Ye already had a decision!

Not just anyone could qualify as a question setter for the college entrance examination. Although Pan Yang had mentioned that many teachers did not wish to be one, it was actually just an offhand remark. If the question setting team truly sent an invitation, hardly any teachers would reject such an opportunity, because it would be an honor and also a very strong acknowledgment of an educator's contributions. This acknowledgment did not mean much to Zhang Ye. What he placed more importance on for this appointment was the fame he would receive from it. In recent times, *The Voice* had brought Zhang Ye an enormous amount of reputation and let him taste the sweetness of his popularity soaring again. But he knew that if he were to achieve his target of becoming an A-list celebrity this year, then

just that amount of reputation was not enough. He had to find the quickest way to get promoted to the A-list rankings, so it was impossible to not take the unconventional path. Another source of fame would always be good. And since his work here was already becoming cyclical, it wouldn't matter to have some "fun" on the college entrance examination's question setting team!

He would be idle anyway!

So why not earn some fame with a "part-time" job!

Chapter 697 – The Chinese Literature Team Approaches Too!

After the meal.

Zhang Ye headed straight to the deputy director's office at Central TV Department 1. When he got there, Jiang Yuan was not around and probably still at lunch. After waiting for around 15 minutes, Jiang Yuan finally returned.

"Eh, Little Zhang?" Jiang Yuan saw him as he walked out from the elevator.

Zhang Ye was sitting on the sofa near the elevator lobby. "Director Jiang."

"What are you doing here? Are you looking for me for something?" Jiang Yuan asked.

Zhang Ye acknowledged, "There's something I need to discuss with you. Can we speak in your office?"

Jiang Yuan was already walking in front of him. "Sure, come in."

When the two of them were inside, Zhang Ye got straight to the point. "Director Jiang, I need to apply for a long leave from the station as I have something to attend to." On seeing Jiang Yuan stunned, he continued, "Just now, someone from the Beijing

question setting team for the college entrance exam contacted me and informed me of a situation that had arisen on their side which they need me to go over to assist them with."

Jiang Yuan was taken aback. "The college entrance exam's question setting team?"

Zhang Ye confirmed, then said, "They were quite urgent about it and only just contacted me, so I wasn't prepared for it either."

Jiang Yuan remained silent for a while before saying, "I heard that those who are responsible for proposing the college entrance exam questions can't return to their homes or contact the outside world even after finishing their work? The college entrance exam will only begin at the end of the month. If The Voice's program team does not have their executive director around, how are they going to handle their work? Your new program has just started making good progress after two episodes have been broadcast, and although the viewership ratings are very satisfying and placed first nationwide for now, you can't be relaxing just because of that."

Zhang Ye said, "I know that, but during the recording a few days ago, we've already recorded three episodes in a row, so the recordings for the broadcasts for next Thursday and the following Thursday are already finished. I also personally supervised the post-production of those episodes yesterday, so there shouldn't be any clash with the times. When the exams are over, I will be back to quickly continue with the production of the recording of the fifth episode's blind audition of The Voice. Please don't worry. There won't be any delays with the program's recording."

Jiang Yuan nodded. "That's fine then."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "That's why I'm here to consult you first."

"Hai, I shouldn't be approving your request for leave." Jiang Yuan said, "You should understand that The Voice's program team is managed single-handedly by you. Besides you, none of them can take up this difficult task. If any unexpected situation occurs, I'm afraid the rest of the program team staff would not be able to handle it. I'm a little worried about them if you're not around." Hesitating a little, he added, "But to be part of the college entrance examination's question setting team is also an honor and not an opportunity that comes knocking frequently. It doesn't seem appropriate if I don't allow you to go. Well, try your best to communicate with college entrance exam team to see if you can at least stay in contact on the phone at all times."

Zhang Ye said, "Sure, I will try to do so."

Jiang Yuan said, "Alright then, when you get back to the office, inform your program team staff about it. Settle whatever needs to be settled and do a proper handover."

"Sure." Zhang Ye excused himself and left.

.....

Downstairs.

In The Voice's program team office.

When Zhang Ye came back, he immediately clapped his hands to grab everyone's attention and gather them around. "Everyone, stop whatever you're doing now. I have something to announce."

Everyone looked over.

"Eh?"

"Director Zhang, please speak."

"Do you have any instructions for us?"

In the end, Zhang Ye said something surprising to all, "I'll go on a long leave for the next two weeks, so I'll be leaving the work here to all of you!"

The moment the staff heard this, it stirred a commotion.

"Ah?"

"You've applied for leave?"

"For about two weeks? For more than ten days?"

"Who will be in charge over here if you aren't around!?"

"Man, Director Zhang, can you stop fooling around? We'll be lost without you around!"

From the proposal planning of The Voice to the pulling in of sponsors and organizing the preliminary auditions, all these stages of production were fully handled by Executive Director Zhang Ye alone. When they heard that he was going to drop everything at work, no one could get used to it.

Zhang Ye said, "It's only for a little more than ten days of work. Since we've already recorded the next two episodes, when the time comes, you all can just hand it over to the other department to handle. It's not like you all are responsible for the broadcast and other tasks, so there isn't really anything to handle either. At most you all will have to follow my plans and instructions to promote the program, clarify any rumors, handle the forums, and create some discussion topics. Surely you don't need me around for such minor tasks, do you? In a while, I'll refine the remaining work processes for everyone. If you have any questions, you can ask me now. We will discuss and solve any issues that you all might have. After 2 PM, I will not be around in the office anymore and will only return at the end of the month."

Little Wang took a deep breath and said, "Then, then should we call you if an unexpected situation occurs?"

Zhang Ye said, "My affairs are a little complicated in the coming days, so I might not be able to be contacted on the phone. In any case, try to solve the problems by yourselves. There shouldn't be a

possibility of an unexpected situation." He only dared to go on leave for that many days because he had already thought of all the possible scenarios and felt that there shouldn't be any incidents happening.

The program recording was already done.

Any unexpected scenarios were planned for.

If an incident still occurred, then all of you should just quit. That would mean that everyone has just been dawdling around!

.....

An hour later.

A little before 2 PM.

While Zhang Ye was taking the elevator down, he made a call to Pan Yang: "Hello, Dean Pan. I've settled my things over here and applied for leave already. Where are you guys currently?"

Pan Yang: "You're at Central TV Tower?"

Zhang Ye: "Yes."

Pan Yang: "Then let me get someone to pick you up."

Zhang Ye: "I can drive there myself."

Pan Yang: "This location is confidential, I'll get someone to pick you instead."

Zhang Ye: "I see. Fine, I'll inform security about it. Ask the driver to come in by the side gate for staff and just tell security that he's looking for me. I'll be waiting at the smoking area on the first floor."

Pan Yang: "OK, I'll arrange it."

Zhang Ye went downstairs to inform security and proceeded to the Central TV Tower's lobby to sit down on the sofa there. Thinking for a moment, he made a call back to his family.

Du du. The call connected.

"Hello." It was a childish voice on the other end.

Zhang Ye laughed: "It's me."

Chenchen acknowledged on the other end.

Zhang Ye: "Are any of my parents at home?"

Chenchen: "They're both at home."

Zhang Ye: "Then ask one of them to answer the phone."

"Grandma, Zhang Ye's on the phone." Chenchen called for her.

Soon after, his mother answered: "Hello, what's the matter, son? I'm making dumplings with your dad and my hands are covered with flour. If you have something to say, say it quickly."

Zhang Ye got straight to the point: "I can't come home for some days and probably can't be contacted through my phone either, so I'm informing you beforehand. The two of you don't need to work so much anymore now, right? I'll leave Chenchen in your care for now. She'll be on summer vacation soon, so don't let her leave the house and run about."

His mother asked: "Where are you going?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "It's something good. I was invited to join the Beijing college entrance examination's question setting team."

When his mother heard that, she received a pleasant surprise. "Really? Is it confirmed?"

"Yea, it's already been decided." Zhang Ye said: "But we will be isolated from the public and probably can't make any calls out either."

His mother immediately said: "Don't worry, just go on ahead and do what you need to do. Your dad and I will take care of Chenchen, so you don't have to worry about that. Do well, son, I believe in you."

Zhang Ye: "OK."

After the call to his mother, Zhang Ye was just about to inform Wu Zeqing when suddenly another call came in. From the caller ID, he knew that it was Chang Kaige from Peking University's Chinese Department.

Zhang Ye was taken aback for a while, then pressed the answer key: "Dean Chang."

Chang Kaige: "Teacher Zhang, is it convenient to talk now?"

"Yes, no problem." Zhang Ye said.

Chang Kaige: "I have an urgent matter over here and was wondering if you'd be interested in it. It should be a good thing to you. There has been an unexpected situation with the Beijing college entrance exams. The Chinese Literature exam papers are..."

Zhang Ye interrupted: "You want me to propose questions?"

Chang Kaige was a little surprised: "You're very sharp."

Zhang Ye: "It's not that I'm sharp. Rather Dean Pan from Peking University's School of Mathematical Sciences called me earlier to invite me to join the Mathematics question setting team."

When he heard that, Chang Kaige laughed: "How convenient then. Since the question setting teams will all be at an isolated location, you can go over to the Chinese Literature team to help out after you've finished your work with the Mathematics team. I don't think that will cause any delays."

Zhang Ye said: "Are you on the question setting team as well?"

Chang Kaige said: "I'm not on the team. One of the supervisors of the team contacted me for help. He's an old friend of mine and wanted me to recommend a few people, so I recommended you. You have a high literary standard and a supple mind. Since Beijing's exams this year want to experiment with some changes and creativity, you are naturally the best candidate. So it's decided then. I'll inform them first. When you arrive there, just directly contact the supervisor of the Chinese Literature team."

Zhang Ye said: "Sure."

20 minutes later.

The car arrived to pick him up.

Zhang Ye got into the car and headed straight for somewhere in

the suburbs of Beijing.

Question setter for both the Chinese Literature and Mathematics exam sections? Zhang Ye pondered for a moment. Not only in the history of Beijing's college entrance exam, even throughout all the provinces in the country, there had never been such a precedent!

Chapter 698 – Starting To Set The Questions!

Later that afternoon.

In the suburbs.

At the Beijing college entrance examination's question setting team quarters.

Outside, Pan Yang was waiting to receive him. "Teacher Zhang, you're here."

"Dean Pan." Zhang Ye got out of the car and went over to him. "This place is really far away, where are we? It's almost near Beihe Province already, isn't it?"

Pan Yang laughed. "It's close. This is just a simple place and the scenery isn't too bad either. The two small buildings on the hill are also very well-equipped with all sorts of facilities, so the question setting team always comes and gathers at this place every year." Pausing, Pan Yang stretched out his hand. "Please hand over your cell phone and any forms of communication devices to me first. There will be someone here to specifically keep them for you. Oh, do you see that front gate over there? We'll go inside from there and up the hill, but once we're past that gate, we won't be out anymore until after the college entrance exam is over. If you have to make any calls or settle anything, then do it now while you still can."

Zhang Ye pouted. "Do we have to be that strict? Don't you know my character well enough? Would I possibly leak any questions? I still have a lot of work to handle at the television station. If I'm not around or unable to be contacted, I'm afraid that they won't be able to handle it."

"These are the rules, it's the same for me." Pan Yang threw his hands up.

Zhang Ye blinked a few times. "But didn't you call me with your cell phone today?"

Pan Yang smiled and said, "I am one of the supervisors of the Mathematics question setting team. Surely I need to hold on to a cell phone so that I can communicate with the Higher Education Entrance Examination Board and the other leaders. Besides, when I go back up to the office building, I will still need to surrender my cell phone, so it's the same for everyone."

"Sure, fine then." Zhang Ye took out his phone.

"If there's really a special case, then we will talk about it again," Pan Yang explained.

"OK."

The hill was not high.

After driving for a few minutes, they reached the halfway point of the hill where two office buildings were situated at. Looking at the hilltop, there seemed to be two pavilions up top too and the breeze up here was very refreshing and cool.

All the Chinese Literature, Mathematics, English Language and other subjects' question setting teams were situated in Office Building 1, while Building 2 was designated as the dormitory. After the car was parked on the hillside, Pan Yang alighted together with Zhang Ye. They went straight into Office Building 1 and headed to the Mathematics question setting team's office. There were quite a few people inside and even a hint of the smell of cigarettes. Most of them were gathered in smaller groups and talking away. Some of them were discussing the exam questions. There were even a few who got into an argument. The atmosphere was very tense because everyone was rushing to get the questions out before Monday's deadline, which still had to pass the Board's approval. They carried a lot of stress, as increasing the difficulty along with creativity was nowhere near as easy as it seemed.

When Zhang Ye came inside, the entire office looked at him at once.

"Professor Zhang!"

"Whoa, Teacher Zhang is here?"

"Teacher Zhang."

"Hello, Teacher Zhang."

" I've heard a lot about you."

"Hur hur, we're finally seeing him in person now."

Everyone obviously knew that Zhang Ye would be here today.

Most of them were people Zhang Ye did not know, nor had he seen them before. But even though he didn't know them, it seemed like they knew him very well. Almost every one of them greeted Zhang Ye, with a few of those who specialized in the field of math research pulling him aside for a chat.

On the Mathematics team, Zhang Ye was rather well respected. After all, the global mathematical conjecture—Dale's Conjecture—was solved by Zhang Ye. It was something that many mathematicians looked up to very highly. Zhang Ye was also one of the few world-class mathematicians China could count as theirs, so he was considered to be in the Chinese Mathematics world's elite. When Pan Yang invited Zhang Ye to the Mathematics question setting team, no one had any objections to it and felt that it was only right to do so. No matter how old Zhang Ye was, his standard in mathematics was there for all to see. In the group of around eight people, even if you put them together, including Peking University School of Mathematical Sciences Dean Pan, their total mathematics standards could probably still not match up to Zhang Ye, so who would not be convinced?

Soon, everyone got down to business.

"This question won't make the cut."

"Yeah, this question has little value and the direction the Board has given us is to not include something like it."

"Most of the questions we've been working on for the past month has gone up in smoke, hasn't it? Hai."

"It's pointless to complain, let's just continue on from here. The question I showed to you just now—I think it's has a certain degree of difficulty, can you guys take a look to see if there're any loopholes in it?"

"This won't do."

"Oh? What's the problem?"

"It'd be fine if it was short answer, but this is a multiple choice question. With the answer options available, it would be too easy even though this question might fit better in the first part of the section."

"Hai, it's really too difficult to make something and we don't even have enough time."

"Adding up all the time we have, it's just less than three days time."

"The other question setting teams are probably scrambling as well."

Zhang Ye got into work mode very quickly. He did not say anything and only listened to what everyone was discussing with regard to the questions. He had to familiarize himself with the work first, such as the scope of the question and its presentation, etc. Occasionally, he would ask Pan Yang or the other colleagues about his doubts so that he could quickly understand this world's college entrance exam questions. In the end, he realized that this world's college entrance exam questions and scope were largely the same as his previous world's. The only differences were the points' allocation and the order of the sections. With his current knowledge, he felt more assured.

Zhang Ye said, "Dean Pan, I would like to take a few exams and go back back to my dorm to read up on them. I would also like to have the past rough draft of the exam that was sketched out by our team."

Pan Yang said, "Sure, they're all available."

A young team member said, "Professor Zhang, we're depending on you this time."

Zhang Ye quickly denied that and waved his hands. "I'm only here to support."

But Pan Yang said, "Don't think of just being the support. The Math team is really going to depend on you for the questions. I've

already discussed this with everyone beforehand. The creation of the questions will be mainly led by you."

"Huh?" Zhang Ye said, "Why would I be in charge? Shouldn't the bulk of the questions be coming from you guys while I just need to handle the more difficult questions?"

Pan Yang smiled. "The name Zhang Ye reverberates throughout the entire mathematics field. Since you have joined the Mathematics question setting team, how could anyone else be in charge of the exam? No one should be in charge you, and no one would do so either, so let's not try to be unconventional. Your name will be submitted and made public as the head of the Mathematics examination question setting team. For the majority of the exam, most of the questions will be set by you. I've already sought approval from the Board and they too are saying that's how it should be done."

Zhang Ye said, "You're really ordering me about now, aren't you? If I have to set even half of all these questions, wouldn't that take too much effort? Besides, I still have to go to the Chinese Literature team's office."

A Mathematics team member was taken aback. "Why are you going to the Chinese Literature team's office?"

Zhang Ye said, "I've also agreed to help out with the Chinese Literature exam's question setting team."

Someone said in a speechless manner, "You can even make

Chinese Literature exam questions?"

Pan Yang: "..."

The other team members: "..."

F**k! Why couldn't he set the Chinese Literature exam questions? These mathematicians were suddenly reminded that Zhang Ye was not just a mathematician, he was also an official lecturer at Peking University's Chinese Department. It wouldn't be strange that the Chinese Literature examination question setting team would look for him to help them. Moreover, thinking about it now, Zhang Ye was also very well versed in history, so it would also have been normal if the History examination question setting team wanted him. Professor Zhang was someone who was totally different from the mathematicians like them who spent all their lives learning about math and teaching. Zhang Ye's path ahead was...much broader than theirs!

Pan Yang said, "Then you should arrange your schedule. I don't care about what the Chinese Literature team does, but over here at the Mathematics team, we must definitely finish on time."

Zhang Ye said, "OK, I will do my best. But first let me go and take a look at the Chinese Literature team."

Pan Yang nodded. "Fine. Get yourself familiarized with the work first. We'll meet here again tomorrow morning before 9 AM. We'll continue discussing the questions at that time."

"Sure, I'll try to come up with a few questions tonight as well." After saying that, Zhang Ye excused himself and left.

He asked around for where the Chinese Literature team was located and then went to find the place. He was planning to make some introductions there first and get a few copies of their exams to research.

The Chinese Literature team office door was open.

Inside, there were slightly less than ten people discussing the exam. However, it did not seem as intense as the discussion over at the Mathematics team. Everyone spoke softer and it also quieter in here.

When Zhang Ye stepped in, he immediately noticed someone familiar, an old acquaintance whom he enjoyed a good relationship with. "Teacher Su!"

Peking University Chinese Department Teacher Su Na suddenly turned her head, looking surprised. "Teacher Zhang?"

"You're here too?" Zhang Ye thought for a bit but realized it wasn't that surprising. Peking University's Chinese Department was ranked number one in the entire country, so it wasn't that unexpected to have a Chinese Department teacher here.

When the others heard the commotion, they also looked over.

Eh?

Zhang Ye?

Isn't that Zhang Ye?

Everyone in the Chinese Literature team was stunned!

Su Na immediately came over to welcome him. "What are you doing here?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'm helping out at the Mathematics question setting team, so I'm here. Oh, is the chief of the Chinese Literature team here? Dean Chang told me to come and look for him."

Su Na was taken aback. "Looking for the chief?"

At this moment, an office door at the back of the room opened and a man in his forties or fifties walked out. "Teacher Zhang, you're here. My name is Yu Fan."

Zhang Ye shook his hand. "Hello."

Chief Yu said, "Have you dropped by the Mathematics team already?"

"Yes, I have," Zhang Ye answered.

Chief Yu nodded and then turned around to face his colleagues on the Chinese Literature question setting team. "Let me announce something. From today onward, Teacher Zhang will officially be joining our Chinese Literature team."

When everyone heard this, many of them showed rather awkward expressions.

Chief Yu then said to Zhang Ye, "Let me introduce you. This is Teacher Liao Qi from Tsinghua University; this is Teacher Li Rui from Renmin University; this is Teacher Ma Qi from Beijing Normal University; this is Teacher Su Na from...Oh, I don't need to actually introduce Teacher Su since you're both from Peking University's Chinese Department. I'm sure you know each other already?"

Su Na giggled. "Teacher Zhang, welcome."

Zhang Ye also played along and shook her hand. "Thank you, Teacher Su."

As for the others, they were not so friendly. Some of them didn't come forward to Zhang Ye to get to know him a little, and even did not bother to have a short conversation with him.

Chief Yu could also see that these people from the education or literary world seemed to have some sort of disagreement or

conflict with Zhang Ye, but did not say anything. He directly asked Su Na to bring Zhang Ye up to date with the work they needed to do, and then headed back into his office.

In the Chinese Literature team, Zhang Ye did not get the same amount of respect he had when he was at the Mathematics team. The reason was very simple and likely to be because a literary person was typically more scornful of others. Zhang Ye was young and did not have many qualifications, having only worked for a semester at Peking University and even getting suspended later. He also had many conflicts and scolding battles with many of his peers from the literary and education world, so even though there were some peers like Su Na who enjoyed a good relationship with Zhang Ye, there were definitely more who had a poor relationship with him. Some of the literary and education world's members had not even met Zhang Ye before, but already hated him. As Zhang Ye had offended too many people before, now that they saw him coming on board and joining the Chinese Literature team as an exam question setter, a lot of the teachers were not convinced and also felt that he was not worthy to be here.

They all whispered privately to each other.

"What is he doing here?"

"I don't know."

"What the heck is Old Yu thinking?"

"So what if he knows how to compose some poems? That doesn't

mean that he can set questions for the college entrance exam!"

"He's too rash, didn't he get suspended because of scolding others?"

"The controversy he created after he started that lecture on Dream of the Red Chamber still exists now. There are still many critics of his theory. For someone who is not diligent academically, how can we let him come and set the college entrance exam questions?"

"I am however convinced of Zhang Ye's standard in Mathematics, which by the way he is really great at, so even if he is going to be in charge of setting their exam questions, no one would object to it. But the Chinese Literature exam is different! This requires a rigorous understanding of Chinese Literature and also an understanding of Chinese Literature education. It is not something that a teacher who has only been teaching for six months would know!"

In the field of mathematics, Zhang Ye's achievements could be seen by everyone. Because for a mathematical conjecture or a math problem, you can either solve it or you can't. The quality is very clear there and it doesn't need much explaining either. Everyone could recognize it. However, in the literary and languages field, the standards were much blurrier. As they say, in martial arts, there's no second place; in literature, there's no first place. It was extremely difficult to differentiate who was better than another. Even if something you wrote was not read by anyone due to a lack of attention, if the experts and literature awards jury said that you were good, then you were good, which in turn meant you were a

qualified literatus. On the contrary, the work you had written could be seen by a whole lot of people, gaining lots of attention, but if the industry insiders did not recognize you and picked at your faults, there was nothing you could do about it either.

This was the exact situation Zhang Ye was in. As he had offended too many people, the controversy surrounding his works in the literary field had always been huge.

He was young.

Had never received an award before.

Was a controversial figure in the industry.

Just based on these three points, it meant that Zhang Ye was doomed to his awkward position in the literary field. Those who liked him felt that he would become part of the new generation of leading figures in the Chinese literary world; those who disliked him said that he was the black sheep of the literary world and would try ways and means to freeze him out of the field.

Zhang Ye was not surprised by their reactions. He still maintained a smile and continued doing what he needed to do. In any case, he wasn't thinking of making friends with this bunch of people anyway.

He chatted with Su Na for a short while to find out about the situation. After that, Zhang Ye took a sample exam and went back

to his dorm in Building 2. He lay in bed relaxed and started studying the exams section by section. Occasionally, he would flip open some high school Chinese Literature and Mathematics textbooks for reference.

Actually, Zhang Ye already had an idea in mind very early on. To suddenly scrape the current batch of exams and then come up another version that was more difficult might not seem easy to this group of exam question setters. They might not know where to start from or there might be insufficient time to do it, but to Zhang Ye, this wasn't a big issue at all. As long as he could understand this world's college entrance examination's situation and scope of the questions, then everything else would be as easy as the flip of a hand. That was because this guy's mind might not have much of anything, but a lack of college entrance exams was not one of them!

2009's Jiangsu exams.

2010's Hebei exams.

2011's Shanghai exams.

He had everything he needed and more! He had even taken those exams dating back to the 90s. As someone who had participated in the college entrance exams of his previous world, the amount of past exams he had seen, taken, and studied numbered close to at least a hundred. What he needed to do now was to find the suitable questions and put them together effectively!

Picking up his pen, Zhang Ye started to write his first question.

Chapter 699 – Shocked Examinees!

That night.

In the dorm.

Zhang Ye opened the game ring and bought a "Memory Search Capsule." After eating it, he started recalling his previous world's memories of the college entrance exam questions. He could still clearly remember many of the wondrous questions he had come across before but had also forgotten a lot of them, so he could only rely on the Memory Search Capsule to remember them.

One capsule was not enough.

Then he used some more Reputation Points to buy another three capsules and gulped them all down in one go.

Zhang Ye's goals were not just purely limited to his previous world's past college entrance exam questions. Many of the questions used by Tsinghua and Peking University for their student admissions and other kinds of extremely difficult questions were brought up within Zhang Ye's memory. He expanded his coverage on the quantity of questions so that he could make the questions better.

An hour.

Two hours.

Zhang Ye kept the lights on and worked nonstop.

"Eh, this question is pretty good!"

"Haha, this question must be used!"

"This question is fine too, let me shortlist this first!"

"F**k, this question will definitely get me some scoldings! Hehe, but it has to be this! What Dean Pan said was right. Other people might be afraid of being scolded but does this bro seem scared of being scolded?"

He progressed very quickly and efficiently. In the process of setting the questions, this guy would even laugh evilly sometimes. Without a doubt, he must have come up with some extremely tough questions!

.....

Meanwhile.

Each province's, municipality's, and autonomous region's higher education entrance examination boards were also busy with the setting of their college entrance exam questions. Some of the provinces had already finished their papers while others were still finishing up theirs.

There were a lot of discussions online.

On Weibo and some of the forums, all sorts of discussions were going on. It was always like this on a daily basis; some people would discuss makeup products, some would gossip about celebrities, and some were still dwelling on the surprise of the success of The Voice of China. Of course, there were also numerous examinees, their parents, and members of the public fervently discussing this year's national college entrance examination. As the college entrance exam's date neared with each passing day, the news regarding the college entrance exam of each province was also getting increasingly popular.

"It's time for the annual college entrance exam again."

"Ai, my child is going to take the exam soon but I wonder if he can score well enough to pass!"

"That's right, it's only a few days away."

"Who will oversee the setting of the questions in Shanghai this time? The questions for the History exam last year were all rather difficult."

"Our Greater Jiangsu Science exam questions last year were also quite difficult. It will be my turn this year to take the college entrance exam. I hope that [Greater Jiangsu](#) won't try too hard and just give some easy questions. I'm begging for easier questions!"

Comprises the Jiangsu and Shanghai Provinces

"The people of Jinshi express their great stress!"

"The people of Jiangnan Province cannot help but laugh. Who's saying that their stress is greater than ours? Last year, our college entrance exam questions were evaluated as the most difficult in the entire country. No one in the entire province got full marks in any of the Mathematics, Chinese Literature, Arts, and Science sections. Even the top student had points deducted!"

"Our Liaodong Province had questions that weren't simple too."

"Haha, as the greatest, I have absolutely no stress!"

"Pfft, your Beijing exams are always so simple every year!"

"That's right. I've attempted three of Beijing's exams and could achieve tier 1 scores. But when I attempted the other provinces' exams, I could only achieve tier 2 scores. Don't you think there's too big a difference in difficulty?!"

"You people from Beijing are too fortunate!"

"F**k, I could do the Beijing exams when I was in my second year of high school!"

"They are all college entrance exams but why is there such a stark

difference in difficulty?!"

"I despise your Beijing college entrance exams!"

.....

A certain Weibo trending topic.

The topic regarding this year's Beijing exams had appeared on Weibo for discussion. The people who joined the discussion were the examinees in Beijing and their parents.

"I hope that this year will even be slightly easier."

"Actually, it's pointless to be any easier. If the subjects are easy and everyone can get high scores, it will just result in a higher cutoff entry to college. It will be the same outcome in the end."

"There will be surely some difference, the easier the better!"

"Right, but I hope that the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board will maintain their style and inherit the fine tradition of the Beijing college entrance exam difficulty. I will give a Like to all of you if the papers are strictly set with a very, very, very, simple line of thought to the questions!"

"Ha, it shouldn't be too easy, otherwise it won't be challenging at all!"

"Agreed, it's meaningless if it's too simple."

Beijing's examinees obviously had less stress compared to other provinces' students as the conversations showed. Some of the examinees were happily chatting with extremely relaxed manners. Others were positively cocky, bragging that they wished the college entrance exams would be more difficult, or else it would not be a challenge to them.

"The question setters are still the same old batch of people this time? Wasn't there some news released earlier?"

"Yes, I saw it too."

Someone immediately posted a screenshot of the roster online.

"That's right, it's this one."

"It's the same teams as last year!"

"Yu Fan was the chief of the Chinese Literature question setting team. He normally sets essay and short answer questions. It's always more or less the same thing every year with nothing new to expect."

"I also know that Teacher Liao Qi from the Chinese Literature team was present on last year's team as well. His questions were

pretty easy as they were basically as good as gimme questions."

"The Chinese team added Teacher Su Na from Peking University's Chinese Department? And she's even a young teacher? Her standard should be somewhat limited then, I don't think she will be able to set any difficult questions."

"Right."

"It's the same teachers for the Science exam section as well."

"The Mathematics team is also comprised of the same old teachers. When I saw these familiar question setters' names, I suddenly had an unprecedented confidence for this year's college entrance exam! Hahaha!"

Suddenly, just as these examinees and parents were discussing the exam restfully, a piece of news appeared online out of nowhere.

"Latest news from the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board: This year's lead question setter for the Beijing Mathematics exam section has been changed to Associate Professor Zhang Ye from Peking University's School of Mathematical Sciences!"

When this news report was published, the entire batch of Beijing college entrance examinees were stunned!

Many of these examinees and parents who were arrogant earlier were now at a loss for words.

"Holy shit!"

"Your sister!"

"F**k your second granny!"

"Zhang Ye is setting the questions? How can that be?!"

"You can't do things like that!"

"That's such a d*ck move! What are they trying to achieve with that! Are they even leaving us a path to retreat?! Of all people, why did you people find Zhang Ye?!"

"I'm stunned!"

"Heavens! I have a bad feeling about this!"

"Me too, why am I getting the shivers!?"

"Zhang Ye...Zhang Ye..."

"It's over! It's going to suck!"

"That Teacher Zhang never does things predictably! Let him set the questions? Then do we still have a chance of survival?"

After many of the examinees from the other provinces saw the news released by the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board, they all gathered to this discussion board. People from Beijing were sarcastic to begin with. Due to their past year exams always being so simple and having little to worry about, the examinees from Beijing were bragging and stepping on people everywhere, enraging the masses. But upon hearing that Zhang Ye was going to be the Beijing question setter for the Mathematics section, the examinees from other provinces all came in laughing and observing the fallout!

"Serves them right!"

"Hahahaha! I'm dying of laughter!"

"Pride goes before the fall! This is what it means to suffer after ultimate joy!"

"With Zhang Ye setting the questions, there will be lots for you guys to suffer with!"

"Hehe, he is one of the few world-class mathematicians in China! Zhang Ye is such a wondrous and wicked fellow, so the questions he'll set definitely won't be any good for you!"

"The people of Jiangsu send their condolences to the Beijing examinees. You're on your own! Good luck!"

"The people of Jiangnan send their condolences to the brothers and sisters of Beijing. Everyone, take care!"

At this moment, there were still some confused examinees and parents from Beijing who did not normally pay attention to the news online. They asked with doubt: "Although Zhang Ye is one of the top mathematicians in the country, the questions he set might not necessarily be difficult and could even be very simple instead. Aren't you people overthinking it? Everyone is just scaring themselves maybe?"

The next moment, someone posted the elementary math questions that were leaked from the time when Zhang Ye presented them at Beijing's Experimental Primary School.

The questions were: Follow the rhythm and write out the multiplication formula (a set of onomatopoeic words):

1: Ding Ding Ding, Ding Ding Ding;

2: Ah, Ah, Ah, Ah;

3: Wu Wu Wu, Wu Wu Wu;

4: Miao Miao, Miao Miao, Miao Miao.

Following that, another set of elementary math questions which were posted by Zhang Ye when he held "Zhang Ye's Classroom" on Weibo previously were all screenshotted and posted one by one.

After that, those examinees and parents who did not know about it earlier all fainted at once!

"Holy sh*t!"

"What kinds of questions are those?!"

"Elementary math questions? Elementary your sister!"

"This is too damn difficult!"

"These elementary questions are already so difficult? If Zhang Ye were to set the college entrance exam questions, wouldn't it be insane? Who would be able to answer them? Oh my dear lord! Does the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board need to be so aggressive?!"

"Zhang Ye, cursing your great grandpa!"

"I want to cry! What to do?"

"Why did I have to be taking this year's college entrance exam?! If I knew it would turn out like this, I wouldn't have f**king repeated

my studies last year! I would have just gone to study at a third-tier college and be counting my blessings now!"

"Back then, someone mentioned on Weibo what it would be like if Zhang Ye became the question setter for the college entrance exam. But who could have expected this to be a f**king prophecy that came true! Our cursed mouths! Pui! Pui!"

"That's right, it actually turned out to be real!"

"The gods are out to destroy me! My math has never been good!"

"Teacher Zhang, I'm your hardcore fan. Please don't come to Beijing to set the questions, go be a scourge to the examinees of the other provinces or autonomous regions instead! I beg of you!"

Among them, some straight-A students of Beijing remained fearless.

Some of the straight-A students left their comments on Weibo.

"It's not such a big deal. They're just questions made by Zhang Ye. How different can they be!"

"I'm pretty good at math, so no matter who sets the questions, I'm still confident."

"I also don't have any stress as long as the Chinese Literature

exam section remains easy."

"Yes, the Chinese Literature exam questions are key. It doesn't matter whether the Mathematics exam questions are difficult or not, those will still be a breeze for me."

Usually, people who excelled in math would only receive average marks in their Chinese Literature results. That was the reason why they felt that even if the Mathematics exam questions were more difficult, it was a good thing for them as it would help mark a distinct difference between them and the weaker students, which was advantageous to the straight-A students. All they wanted was for the Chinese Literature exam section to be easy.

However, just a few seconds after these straight As student had happily posted their thoughts online, another piece of news appeared on Weibo!

"Latest news from the Beijing college entrance examination's question setting team: The latest update confirms that Zhang Ye has also joined this year's Beijing Chinese Literature exam question setting team and will likely be responsible for creating the short answer questions. It is understood that this is the first time in history that a person will be handling the question setting in both the Mathematics and Chinese Literature teams concurrently! "

Upon reading this news, those straight-A students from Beijing were totally stunned!

"What the f**k!"

"Holy shit, Zhang Ye is also setting the Chinese Literature exam questions?"

"Goddammit!"

Those straight-A students who were typically honest and obedient model students couldn't help but swear when they saw this. They were all shocked by the news update!

Chapter 700 – Operation Send Zhang Ye Home!

Several reports were published one after the other.

Beijing Times: Several young teachers, including Zhang Ye, have joined the college entrance exam question setting teams. This shows that the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board is determined to reform the Beijing college entrance exam. The questions for this year's exams are not likely to be as "comfortable" as previous years' anymore, so let's see how it will turn out.

Beijing Online: A last-minute change in the exam question setting team leaves the Beijing college entrance exams in doubt.

People's Daily Online: On temporary hiatus from The Voice of China, Zhang Ye tries his hand at setting the Mathematics and Chinese Literature sections for the college entrance exam. Will Zhang Ye be up to the task?

The news spread like wildfire!

Online, more and more people found out about the news!

Yao Jiancai posted on Weibo: "Whoa, I was trying to reach Zhang Ye's phone just now to chat with him, but couldn't get through even after trying a few times. I was still wondering what happened. So it was because he had gone up into the hills!"

Zhang Ye's fans were also loving this piece of news.

"Haha, Teacher Zhang is coming up with something else again!"

"Setting exam questions for the college entrance exam? Does he need to go that far?"

"I'm so looking forward to it!"

"I would like to see how difficult the questions Zhang Ye set can get. Is the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board starting to make radical changes this time? It looks like Teacher Zhang will be taking on the lead role this time! But coming back to the point, no one has ever seen Zhang Ye's questions for the high school level before. I wonder if Teacher Zhang Ye can really complete this task? Will his exam questions really end up being too difficult? I guess that's still a big question mark there."

"It will definitely be very difficult!"

"I think so too, Zhang Ye's not going to be easy to deal with!"

"Yeah, who doesn't know what Teacher Zhang Ye's style is like. It's going to be a tough one for those college entrance examinees this time! Plus it's really unlucky to have unfortunately met with Zhang Ye getting appointed this year!"

"I just took the college entrance exam last year, but now that I think of it, my heart is also fluttering with fear. If my mother had given birth to me two months later, I would have to take my college entrance exam this year! This is the first time I feel like I should be giving my heartfelt thanks to my mother!"

There were those who were here to observe the fun.

There were others who were here to make sarcastic remarks.

There were also those who wished to watch the world burn.

Many of the Beijing college entrance examinees who saw this gnashed their teeth in hatred!

"You people, enough!"

"Don't you all have any compassion at all!?"

"Has anyone ever considered how we are feeling? In the final push before the exam, we have practiced countless times on past exams which were easier just so that we get used to the exam's question setter's train of thought and difficulty level. But now they're changing the lead question setter just like that, yet you all are here gloating at our misfortune. Do you all even know how hard we've worked?"

"To be put into this spot by Zhang Ye who has suddenly become the lead question setter for both the Mathematics and Chinese

Literature exam sections! This is as good as taking our lives!"

"Teacher Zhang, knock it off, could you seriously knock it off!"

"Just go back and do The Voice as you were before! Why did you come to the college entrance examination's question setting teams to mess around! Hurry up and go back to where you came from. When my college entrance exam is done, I promise that I will buy three TVs and tune in to Central TV Department 1 every Thursday at 9 PM to support and add to your viewership ratings!"

"We were so close to taking the college entrance exam. How could they suddenly change the lead question setter! This is too unfair! Such bullies!"

"Boycott Zhang Ye!"

"Yeah, let's strongly boycott Zhang Ye!"

"This is numbing! We can't let this guy be the lead question setter!"

"Calling for Teacher Zhang to leave the question setting team!"

"Calling for Zhang Ye to leave the question setting team!"

"+1!"

" +99999!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye, please go home!"

Suddenly, whether it was on Weibo, the forums, or any of the big or small Tieba groups related to Beijing, many college entrance examinees and their parents started a new round of calls for boycotting. It was just over a week ago when the television industry insiders were calling for a boycott on Zhang Ye due to his disruption of the market practices. But now another wave of boycotting activities was beginning. Everyone was "shouting" their mottos. This round of boycott actions was labeled as—"Send Zhang Ye Home"!

The examinees were creating an uproar.

"Teacher Zhang, your house is on fire. Quickly go home and check on it!"

"Teacher Zhang, your telephone bills are due. Quickly go home and pay up!"

"Teacher Zhang, the plants at home need watering. Quickly go home and water them!"

"Teacher Zhang, there's a drop dead gorgeous woman at your house bathing right now. Quickly go home and take a look!"

There were many comments from the examinees. Their messages

made many netizens who were just observing the fun laugh like crazy. One by one, more and more people began following the thread. Some of the more clever replies were even being forwarded countless times!

In the present era of the college entrance exam, it had become a watershed moment in life and an important basis and formation of the current societal structure. So if even the entire society, media, and citizens were focused on something like that, then what could be said of the examinees themselves and their parents? Adding on the famous Zhang Ye from the entertainment circle who always worried others, Zhang Ye's name had become synonymous with this current topic. Naturally, the topic of him joining the Beijing college entrance examination's question setting team had instantly gone viral. Finally, the boycott that was started by the examinees was gathering great momentum!

10!

100!

200!

Numerous Beijing examinees were even starting a group boycott, calling for everyone to join in to their Operation Send Zhang Ye Home, as more and more of the other Beijing examinees started to join!

...

Elsewhere.

The Beijing question setting teams were not in the know of all that was happening.

Zhang Ye had stayed up overnight to rack his brains, trying to write out all the questions.

Some of the other question setters were also still in discussions about the exam questions, while some were eating a late night snack. A few were already deep in sleep. They were all isolated from the outside world while they were here. That meant both physically as well as their communications like cell phones or the Internet, so they were unaware of what was going on out there.

...

Meanwhile.

Over at the Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board.

With the commotion online getting bigger and bigger, the Higher Education Entrance Examination Board also reacted and called an emergency meeting. There were 15 or 16 people taking part in the meeting and every one of their expressions showed that they found it both funny and annoying. None of them had expected that there would be such a huge reaction from the public because of their invitation of Zhang Ye to the question setting team!

Someone spoke but hesitated, "Professor Zhang is..."

Another female staff member was feeling rather helpless. "Teacher Zhang's affinity with the people seems to be very poor. Why does he always get boycotted wherever he goes to! I remember him getting boycotted by those people from the television stations just last week, didn't he?"

A young staff member gave a wry smile. "But that can't be helped, can it? We can't possibly be thinking of sending Professor Zhang home? He is the country's few top mathematicians, so we can't just ask him to come and go as we like. We won't be able to justify our decision that way. If the examinees want to boycott, just let them do it. From a different perspective, this also shows that our decision to invite Professor Zhang to join us was right. Didn't we do so because we wanted to increase the difficulty of the exams?"

A woman said, "That's true."

Finally, after a discussion in the meeting, the Board unanimously decided—they would simply ignore the issue raised by the examinees!

...

The next day.

Operation Send Zhang Ye Home was still ongoing.

"Teacher Zhang, I've deposited 1 billion RMB at your house!"

"Teacher Zhang, your wife is going to give birth soon!"

"Teacher Zhang..."

"Teacher Zhang..."

On one of the larger Beijing forums, in the college entrance exam discussion group, this thread was even stickied at the top. All kinds of people were coming up with all sorts of strategies and posting all kinds of wondrous sounding ideas!

However, to be realistic, everyone knew that this was just a form of self-entertainment by the examinees. Boycott Zhang Ye? The literary world had tried to boycott him before, but their faces ended up getting smacked swollen by Zhang Ye. The SARFT tried to ban him, but he still did whatever he wanted to do. The television industry also tried to boycott him, but now? All of them fell silent and not a single one of them could be seen anywhere. After so many people and groups had tried boycotting Zhang Ye multiple times, none had come to any effect at all, not to mention their group now. The examinees understood that they would have to face reality in the end!

Sure enough, when they went back to school for their classes, every Beijing high school teacher wore a different expression altogether.

...

Beijing Normal University Affiliated High School.

Class 3-1.

A female teacher was standing at the podium, not looking too well. "Class, our revision using the notes and examination guides might be obsolete already. You won't need to do the focused review plan that I designed for everyone a few days ago anymore either. There's no meaning to those assignments anymore. From here on, I will be working with the other Year 3 teachers to prepare something new for everyone to review intensely with, because I'm sure that everyone already knows that the lead question setter this year is Zhang Ye!"

A male student anxiously asked, "How could they change the scope of the exam now, didn't they already approve it beforehand? With this last-minute change, how are we expected to be able to take the exam!?"

"That's right!"

"Teacher, what should we do!"

The female teacher said, "The scope of the exam definitely won't change. It's more or less going to be the same as what we have told you all to study before today. Those are the subjects that the exam

questions will be based on. However, a good question setter will still be able to stop you from getting the correct answer even if they provide you with the exact subject or the proper formula to start with. It's regrettable, but our Year 3 group of teachers has analyzed that Zhang Ye is likely to be such a person. He is possibly the only one in the Chinese math field who has the highest understanding of logic operations and algebra, along with a few other topics. According to our worst case scenario, his questions will be very difficult to answer if you just attempt to solve it using the most conventional methods! That is why this college entrance examination's Mathematics section is really going to be a test of everyone's quality!"

...

At Beijing No.14 High School.

"Teacher!"

"Can you highlight the main subjects for us?"

"Yes, everyone says that Zhang Ye's questions will be very difficult!"

"He wouldn't possibly make us compose a poem, would he?"

"I just hope that the essay questions will not be written by him! The weight of points on the essay section is too high!"

"Teacher Zhang, what kinds of questions will Zhang Ye give?"

The students were talking one after another.

The No.14 High School Chinese Literature teacher held it in for a long time before finally shaking her head and saying, "I don't know either. All you can do right now is completely memorize the entire scope of the subject for the exam, and then..." She stopped there, not wanting to tell them that she could only offer them a blessing on this matter! With Zhang Ye's literary level, no one in the entire country could possibly guess the questions that he would write or which train of thought the questions would be based on!

...

Yucai High.

"Hurry up, class. Everyone has to finish these three sets of exams today!"

"Ah? What exams are these, Teacher?"

"These are the three most difficult sets of exams over the years in all the national college entrance exams that have been held. Everyone, prepare yourselves for this, but it may be possible that this year's Beijing college entrance math exam might be the most difficult ever! The Beijing Higher Education Entrance Examination Board has already sent a very clear signal about this!"

This time, with Zhang Ye's surprising inclusion in the college entrance examination's question setting team, it not only caught the examinees off guard, even the teachers were affected and blindsided!